# PRIDE 04

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF HOUSTON PRIDE 2004

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THE RETURN OF *JOBRIATH*

LOVE after 50?

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InterPride

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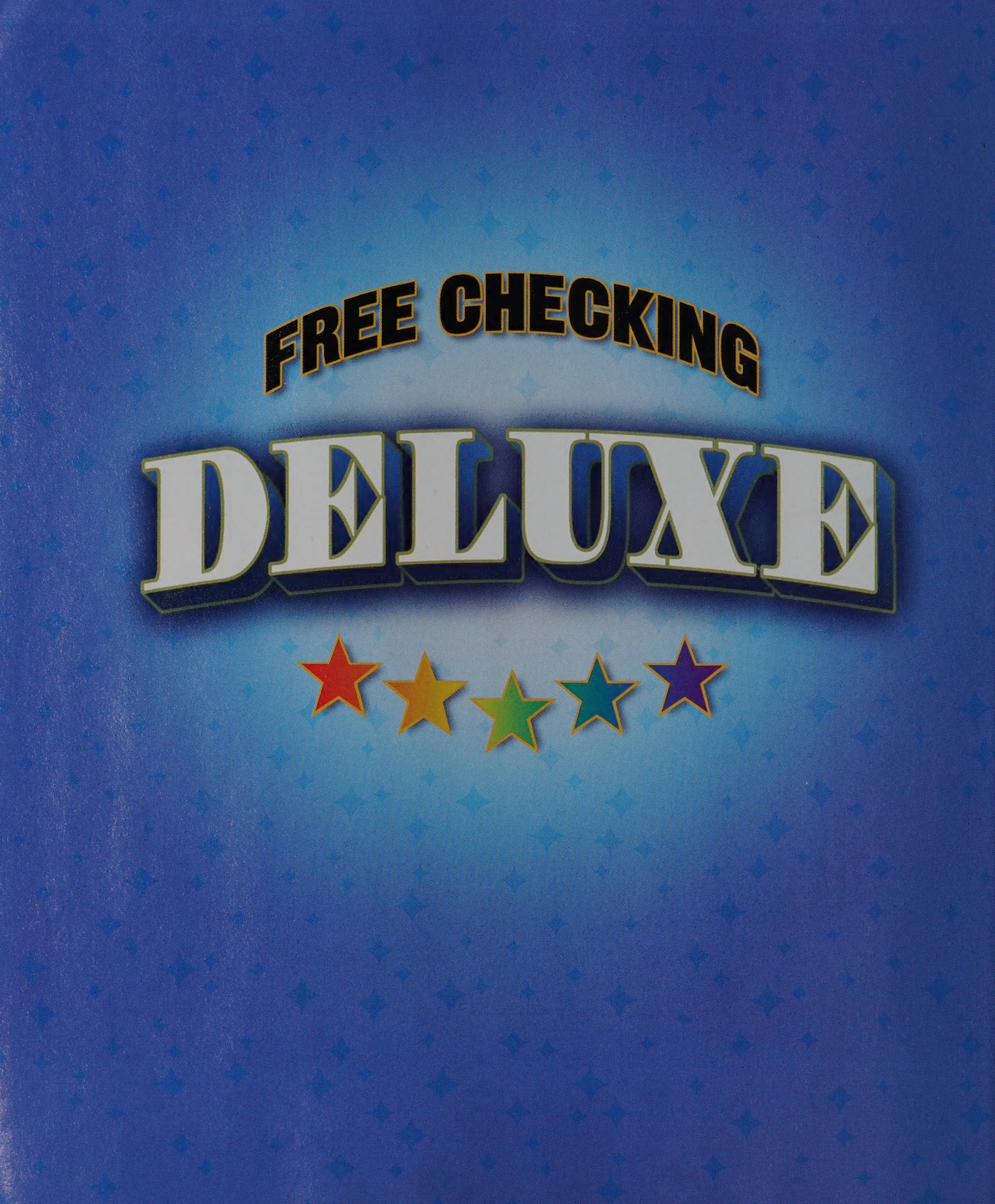
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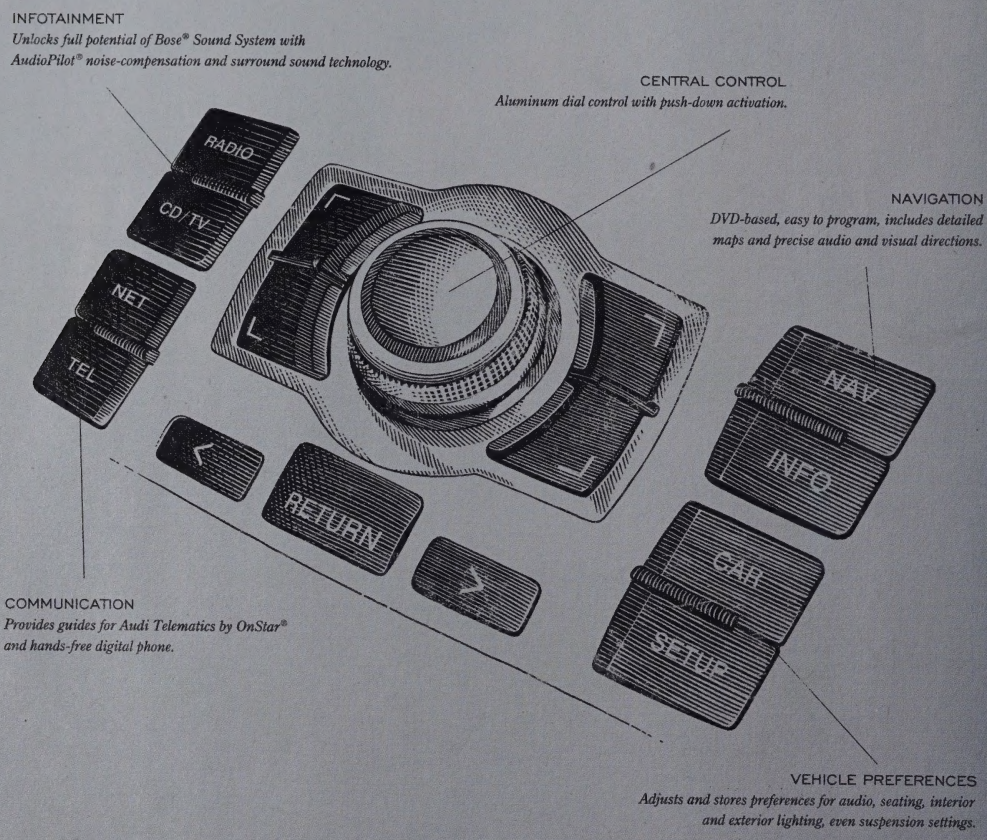


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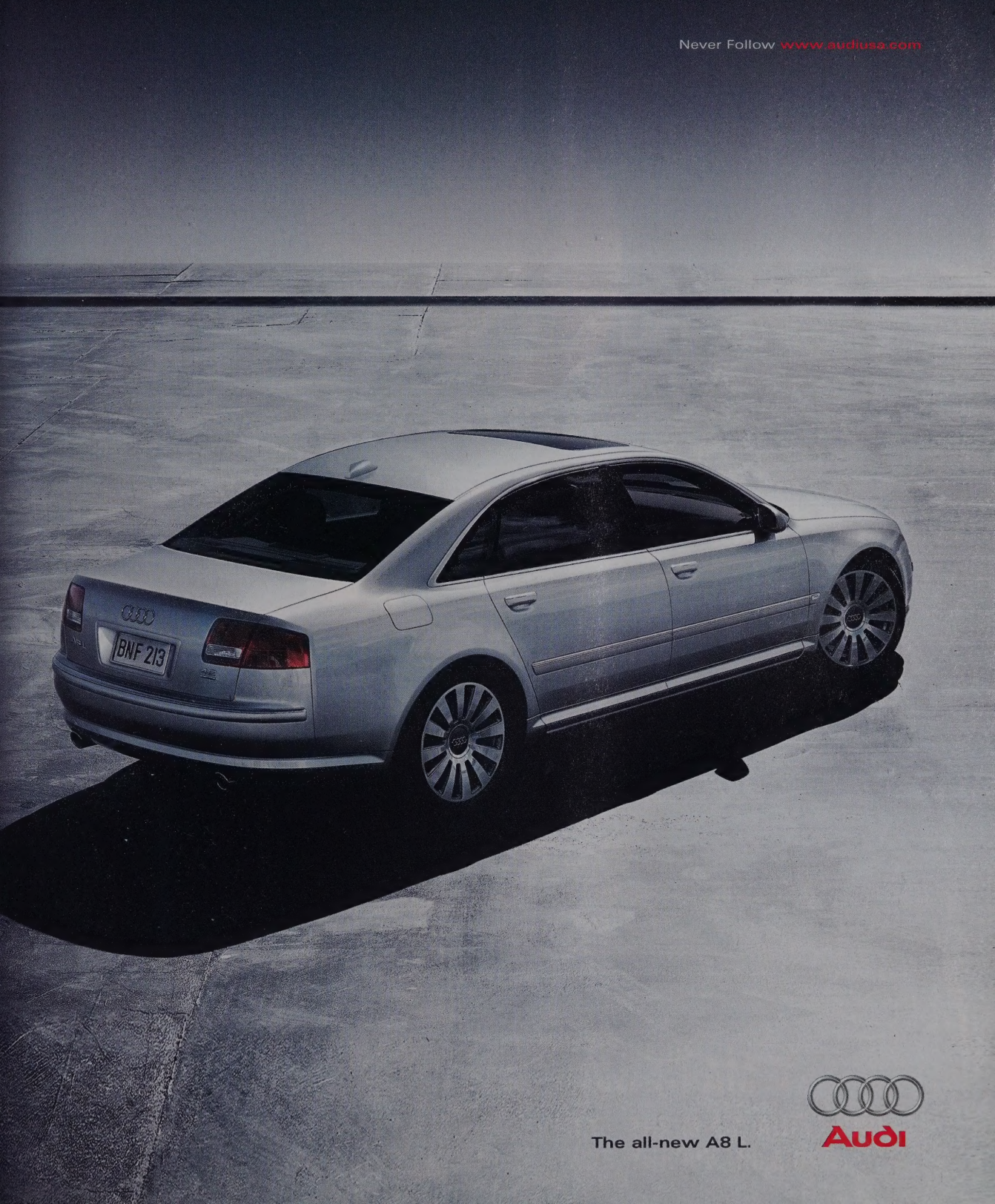
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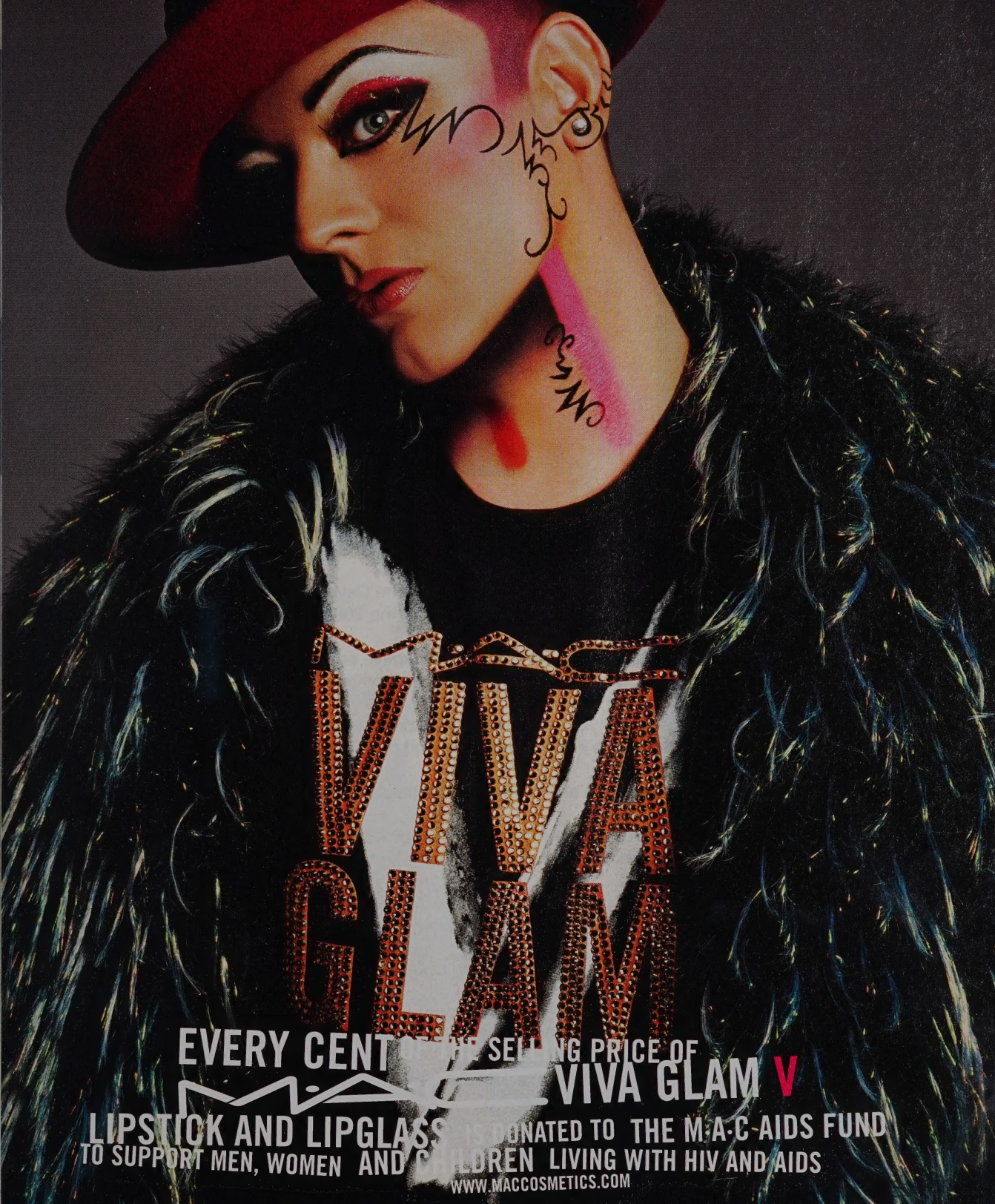
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In this spirit, Pride is more than an event, more than a banner and certainly more than a sponsorship. Pride is about people with whom we share our world, our workplace and our commitment to equality. It is a reflection of tolerance and a glimpse of a world free of stereotypes and discrimination.

Like Diageo's brands, Pride is about celebration — the celebration of life, every day, everywhere.

As the world's leading premium drinks business, all of us at Diageo are proud to be a key supporter in the fight against discrimination and for the advancement of equal rights. These are the values that are personified in Pride, and it is an honor to be a part of this year's events in support of gay and lesbian communities throughout the world.

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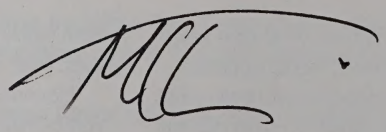
Cheers,



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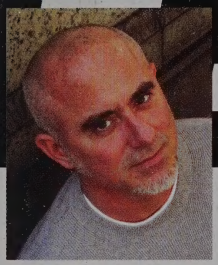
# Editor's LETTER



**Welcome to the 2004 edition of *Pride*.** I'm not telling you anything you don't already know when I say it's been quite a year — and if the past six months are any indication, the excitement will continue.

Example: A year ago, same-sex marriage was practically The Issue That Dared Not Speak Its Name. One year later: Who'd a thunk a bunch of municipal government officials would joyfully force the issue on our behalf?

However you may feel about marriage as an institution (and I would argue it's in need of some serious renovation), I have yet to hear a coherent argument against allowing us the same access to its advantages (and miseries) that others — many of them qualified only by virtue of their sexual orientation — have enjoyed for centuries.

The most interesting aspect of this whole debate, to me, is that while most Americans are opposed to "Gay Marriage," most of them are also opposed to altering the Constitution to ensure that it never happens. This could mean any number of things, but I have a hunch it really says that while most Americans might not approve of us or love us, most of them aren't willing to go to too much trouble to deny us the rights they (and we) all hold dear as Americans and as humans.

It's the same response every Civil Rights movement has gotten; and whether it's consensual or not, that response is "Not now." It took over 50 years of concerted effort for women to win the vote. It's been over 100 years since African Americans stopped being legally regarded as property, and 50 years since Brown v. Board of Education ruled that separate, by its very nature, was not equal.

We are still grappling with the issues raised by those and other Constitutional showdowns.

My point is, no matter what happens, whether this push for progress takes a year, or a century, justice always wins eventually.

On this particular quest, it looks like we're off to a riproaring start...

Happy Pride!

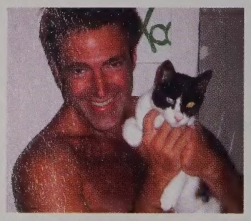
Peter McQuaid

**Peter McQuaid**
Editor

# CONTRIBUTORS

A focus on AIDS and social justice has taken activist, novelist, journalist, filmmaker Anne-Christine D'Adesky from Haiti (where her family roots are) to Rwanda and everywhere in between. She also co-directed a just-released documentary about the global AIDS treatment movement, "Pills, Profits, Protest: Voices of Global AIDS Activists." Her new book on the subject, "Moving Mountains: The Race to Treat Global AIDS" is due in July from Verso Books. For Pride '04, she focused closer to home to find out just how we are re-imagining structures for friendship, love, sex, marriage and commitment. She also ran over to City Hall in San Francisco to chat with and photograph newlyweds during the mass-wedding celebration. "It was great to report on something light and happy for a change," she says.

As dynamic and flexible as English is, it can barely keep pace with a discourse that seems to morph at warp speed — especially in a movement founded on challenging norms that were questionable in the first place. Fortunately, Stacie Stukin was willing to document words and terms both old and new, what they mean and the role they play in self-definition. "I really came to the conclusion that the only way to do this was to actually ask the people who use these terms to describe themselves." So she did. Stukin, who divides her time between Los Angeles and New York City, reports on women's issues, health and pop culture and is a frequent contributor to *LA Weekly, Vibe, Glamour, The Advocate* and *POZ.*



Several years ago, artist and author Konstantin Kakanias created Mrs. Tependris, an ultra-rich, ultra-chic and — most importantly — ultra-*enthusiastic* widow through which he pokes gentle fun at the foibles of The Fabulous. It was Kakanias who decided to send the intrepid Tependris to Gay Pride. More importantly, it was his not-so-fond memories of growing up gay amongst the Greek bourgeoisie in his native Athens that made him want to do this. "I was thrilled to be able to make a contribution," he says. Kakanias' muse (or is it alter-ego?) has been the subject of several books: "Freedom Or Death," "The Contemporary Years," and most recently "...Just Before the Olympic Games in Athens (The Triumph of Chic)."

It's taken a while for the Big, Wide, Mainstream World to realize that Lesbians can be: sexy, smart and (who knew?) funny. But it is Kate Clinton, who has been Out and performing for over two decades, who deserves the title Godmother of The Lesbian Comedy Mafia. And like a good Mafia Godmother, Clinton has been killing audiences across this great land of ours. More to the point, she's been getting us to laugh at *ourselves* in the process. So, who better to ask for some perspective on the State of the Gay Nation in 2004? Clinton's latest CD "Kate Clinton, The Marryin' Kind" is due out this summer. Then, just in time for the Fall Election Season, she plans to hit the road (with a truckload of material, doubtless).

He has been called "The Skinhead Oscar Wilde," and like his namesake, terminally cranky Londoner Mark Simpson has been tweaking sensibilities both Homo and Heterosexual for most of his legal adulthood, covering subjects as diverse as Captain Kirk's bulge and the impact of Air Conditioning on the population distribution of the U.S. But what most Americans don't know is Simpson actually coined the word "metrosexual" nearly ten years ago. This spring, the American Dialect Society voted Simpson's invention "Word of the Year" for 2003. Here, he turns his sights on the Gay-ing of the Mainstream (and vice–versa). Simpson's latest book, "Saint Morrissey," a bio of music's Master of Misery is in stores, now.

If anyone knows about discrimination in the military, it's Tim Bergling, who was kicked out of the Marines as the result of a rumor started by another soldier. "It was ironic. The guy who started the rumor had no idea it was true." Neither did the Marines, reports Bergling. "But the fact that I wasn't married and had attractive male friends was enough." Bergling lives in Northern Virginia, where he is a television news producer and the author of several books, including "Reeling in the Years," and "Sissyphobia." On military policy on gays (which he updates here) Bergling is unapologetically critical: "It's absurd, especially when our soldiers in Iraq are there with British and other soldiers who can be honest with no worries."

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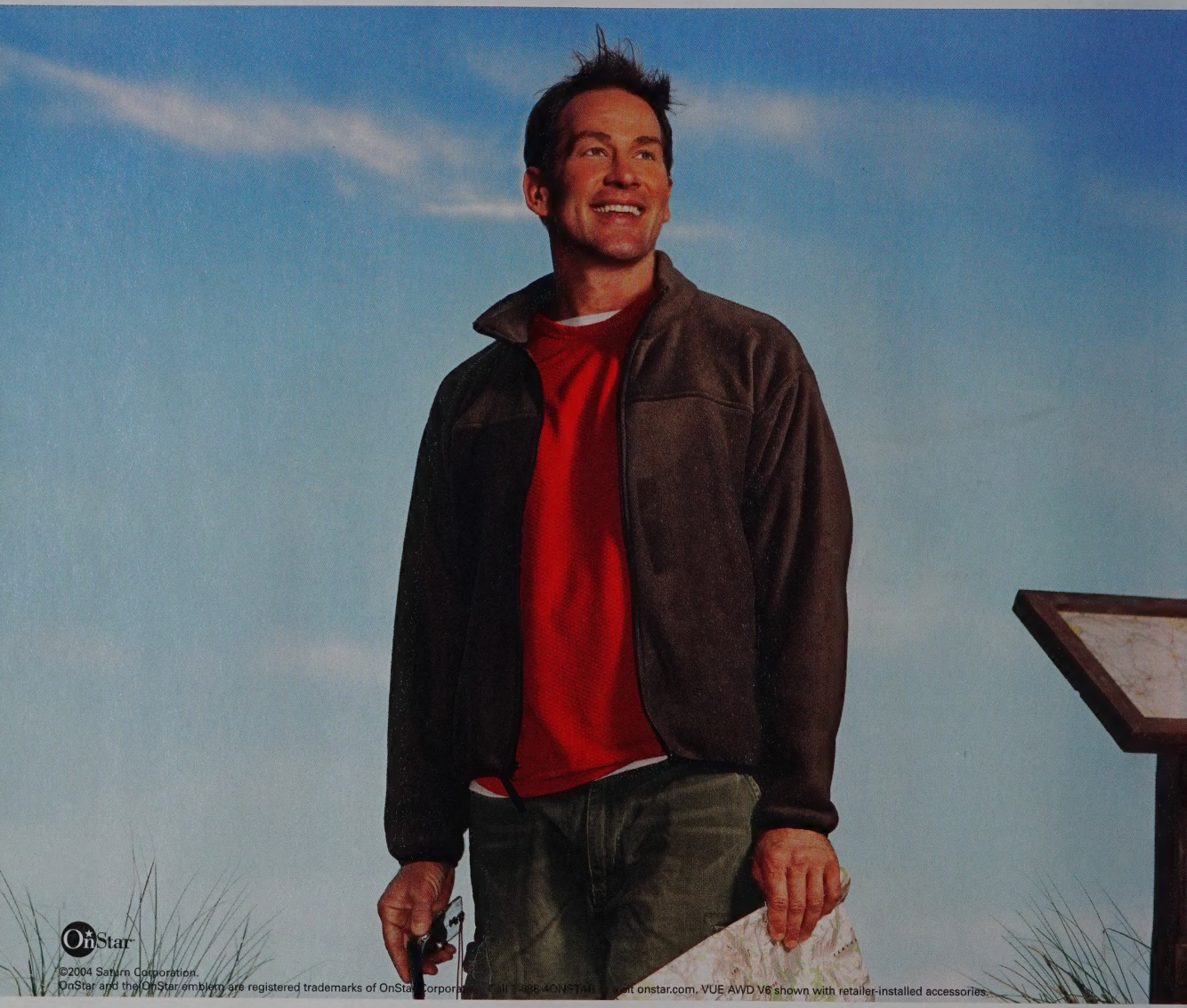


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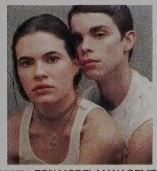

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Join us in remembering former PRIDE Editor Mike Salinas, who died in 2003.
A lover of theater and a crusader for the community, Mike's frustrations
with injustice were tempered only by his gentle soul.
His warm smile and kindness will be missed. Mike, this one's for you.

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# AS WE GO GAYLY FORWARD:

## It's been quite a year already, and it ain't over yet. A few words of wisdom from "Stonehenge Lesbian" **Kate Clinton...**

Recently a student introduced me to a college audience and I think he meant to introduce me as a Stonewall Lesbian. He actually introduced me as a Stonehenge Lesbian. That's old.

For 23 years I have had the great pleasure of being an out lesbian comic. In my early career, so few out gay things happened in the news or media that when they did, I could talk about one of them for five years. Change, which used to be glacial, has reached mach speed. Happily, I can hardly keep up!

We've come a long way from the Stonewall Riots, the Anita Bryant Campaign, ACT-UP, gays in the military and other local skirmishes.

And we've done amazing political and cultural agitating and organizing. Whoever thought *The L-Word* or *Queer Eye* would be on TV, or that we would now have cruises, rodeos, choruses or gayted communities?

But being gay isn't just about leisure options. No matter what you feel about gay marriage, it has become the wedge issue in this election year. We are the butt thong between the cheek of church and the cheek of state, and it is so tiresome.

This is no time to rest on Laurel. Get busy.

### TOP TEN THINGS TO DO TO STOP BEING USED AS A WEDGE ISSUE IN AN ELECTION YEAR:

**10.** Bring someone who is ten years older or younger than you to the next gay event you attend. Don't be bitter; be the bridge.

**9.** Join a national gay organization —National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Human Rights Campaign, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, and The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network. You need them, they need you. This economy is killing their fundraising.

**8.** Start a gay speakers' bureau and be available to speak at schools, churches, and local government committees.

**7.** Start a gay history study group. Meet monthly and discuss an article or book.

**6.** Write letters of complaint or compliment to your local paper, or meet with their editorial board to lobby for better coverage of gay issues. Call your local media outlets.

**5.** Join a gay-unfriendly organization with friends, go to their meetings and speak up. First establish what you have in common. Really lay it on. Then call them out on their homophobia.

**4.** Talk with your family and straight friends about gay marriage — hear their fears, speak your truth, and ask for their support. Then tell them to contact their legislators and register their voice. Threaten family wedding boycotts or gift cancellation for those who won't get with the program.

**3.** Get involved in the inevitable battle over gay marriage coming soon to your town. It will involve door to door canvassing, fundraising, phoning. Out of the chat rooms, into the streets!

**2.** Register to vote. Get at least ten friends to register. If they don't know who to vote for, tell them who to vote for. That way you get eleven votes.

**1.** Come out and come out again. In small and large ways, it is still the basic building block of our movement.

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# The Weddings

Photographs by Rick Gerharter

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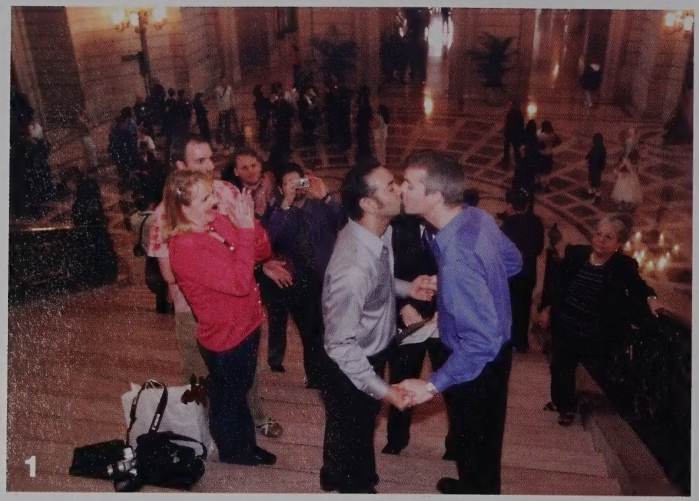
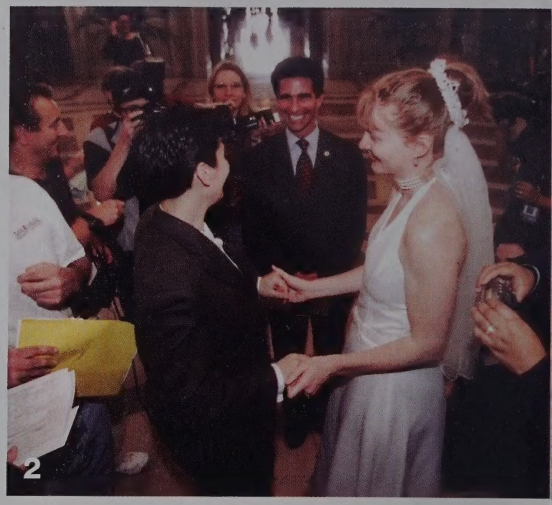
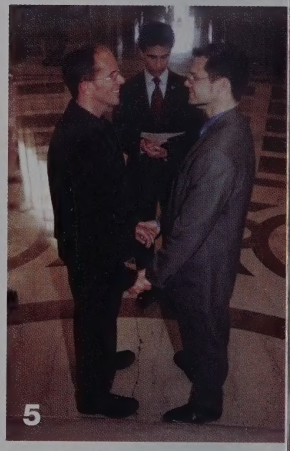
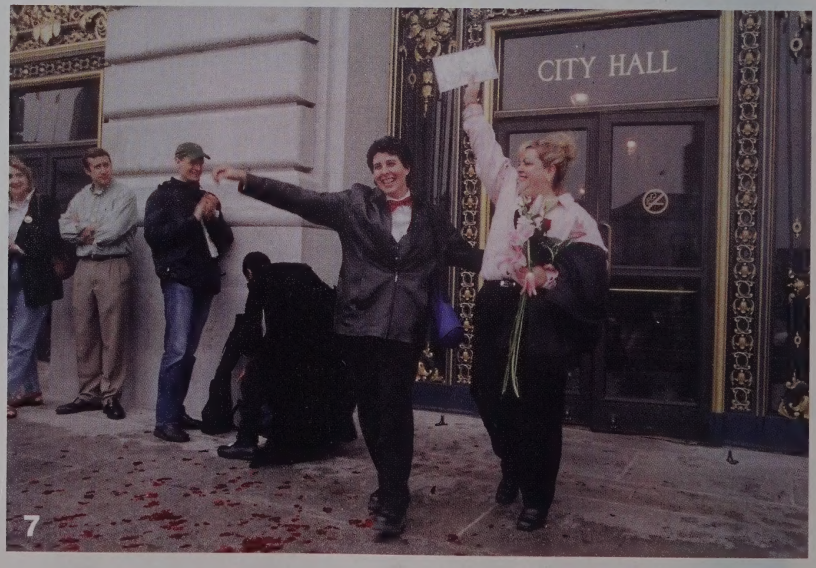









**1** Frank King Perez and Andrew Slakey get married in the rotunda of San Francisco City Hall.

**2** Marriage Equality California–activist Molly McKay and Davina Kotulski get married by Assemblyman Mark Leno.

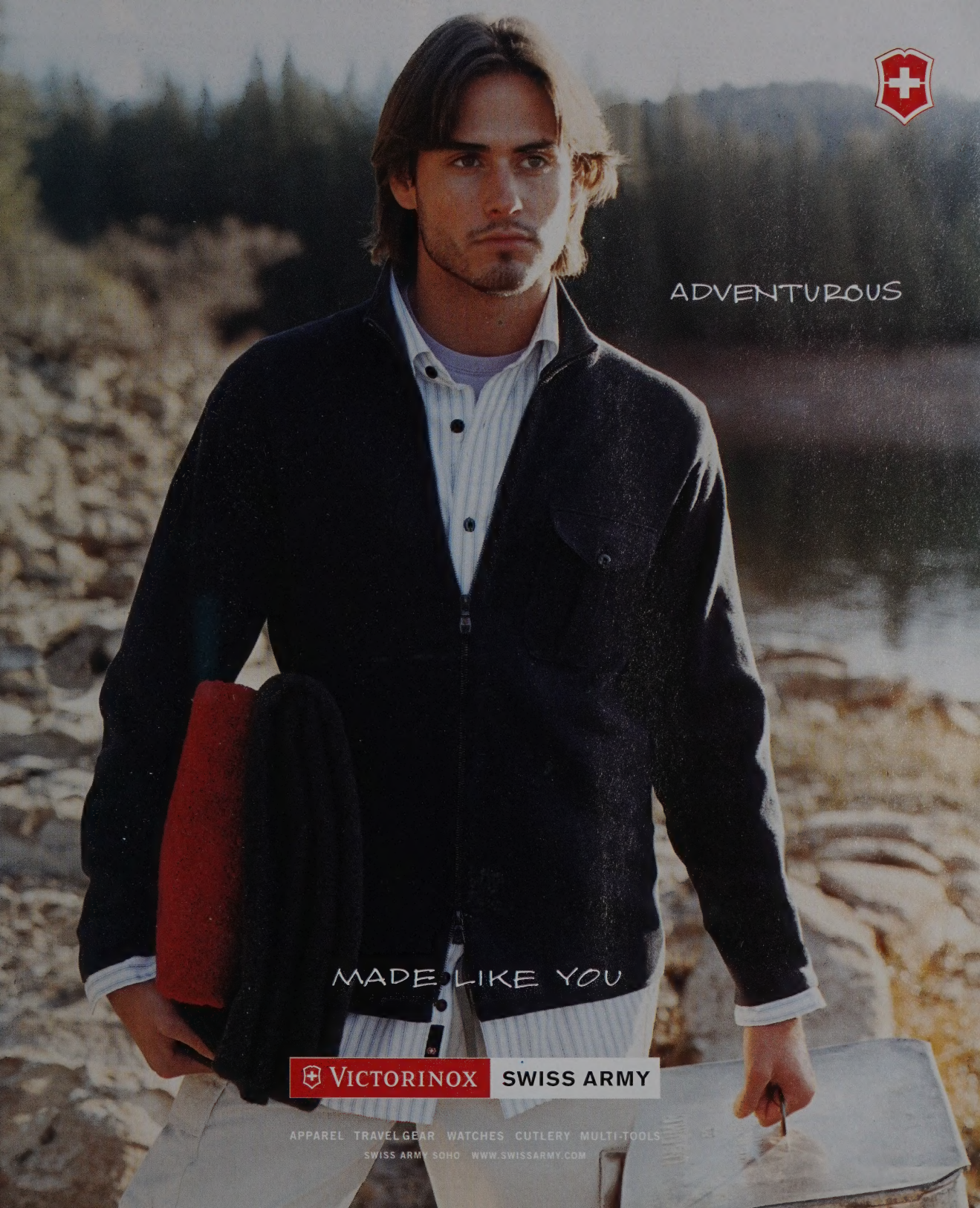
**3** The line of those waiting to get their marriage licenses forms outside San Francisco City Hall.

**4** Tom Hurlbut and Rick Rossi are greeted by a spontaneous crowd of well-wishers outside San Francisco City Hall following their marriage.

**5** Ron Regina and Bart Broome get married by Assemblyman Mark Leno in the rotunda of City Hall.

**6** Davina Kotulski and Molly McKay get married by Assemblyman Mark Leno.

**7** Danielle Buell and Julie Robinson from Grant's Pass, Oregon celebrate their just-married status outside San Francisco City Hall.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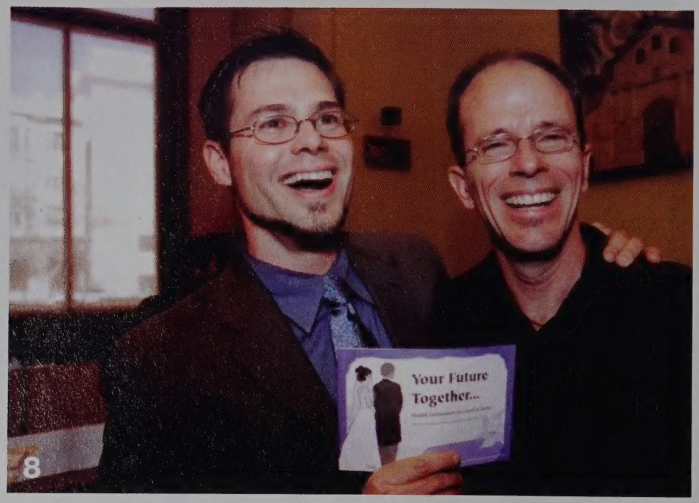


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**8** Bart Broome and Ron Regina hold a pamphlet, distributed by the County Clerk's office, for mixed-sex couples about to get married.

**9** Sharon Stricker and California Assemblywoman Jackie Goldberg smile after their marriage in San Francisco City Hall.

**10** Kelli Carpenter and comedian Rosie O'Donnell greet well-wishers in City Hall following their marriage.

**11** An unidentified couple descends the staircase in San Francisco City Hall following their marriage.

**12** Jo Anderson gives her newly wed, Amanda Gerrie, a big hug following their marriage in City Hall. They are from Oakland, California.

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City and County of San Francisco
Office of the Mayor

**Letter to County Clerk**

February 10, 2004

Nancy Alfaro
San Francisco County Clerk
City Hall, Room 168
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Ms. Alfaro,

Upon taking the Oath of Office, becoming the Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco, I swore to uphold the Constitution of the State of California. Article I, Section 7, subdivision (a) of the California Constitution provides that "[a] person may not be . . . denied equal protection of the laws." The California courts have interpreted the equal protection clause of the California Constitution to apply to lesbians and gay men and have suggested that laws that treat homosexuals differently from heterosexuals are suspect. The California courts have also stated that discrimination against gay men and lesbians is invidious. The California courts have held that gender discrimination is suspect and invidious as well. The Supreme Courts in other states have held that equal protection provisions in their state constitutions prohibit discrimination against gay men and lesbians with respect to the rights and obligations flowing from marriage. It is my belief that these decisions are persuasive and that the California Constitution similarly prohibits such discrimination.

Pursuant to my sworn duty to uphold the California Constitution, including specifically its equal protection clause, I request that you determine what changes should be made to the forms and documents used to apply for and issue marriage licenses in order to provide marriage licenses on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to gender or sexual orientation.

Respectfully,

Mayor Gavin Newsom

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# TOGETHER

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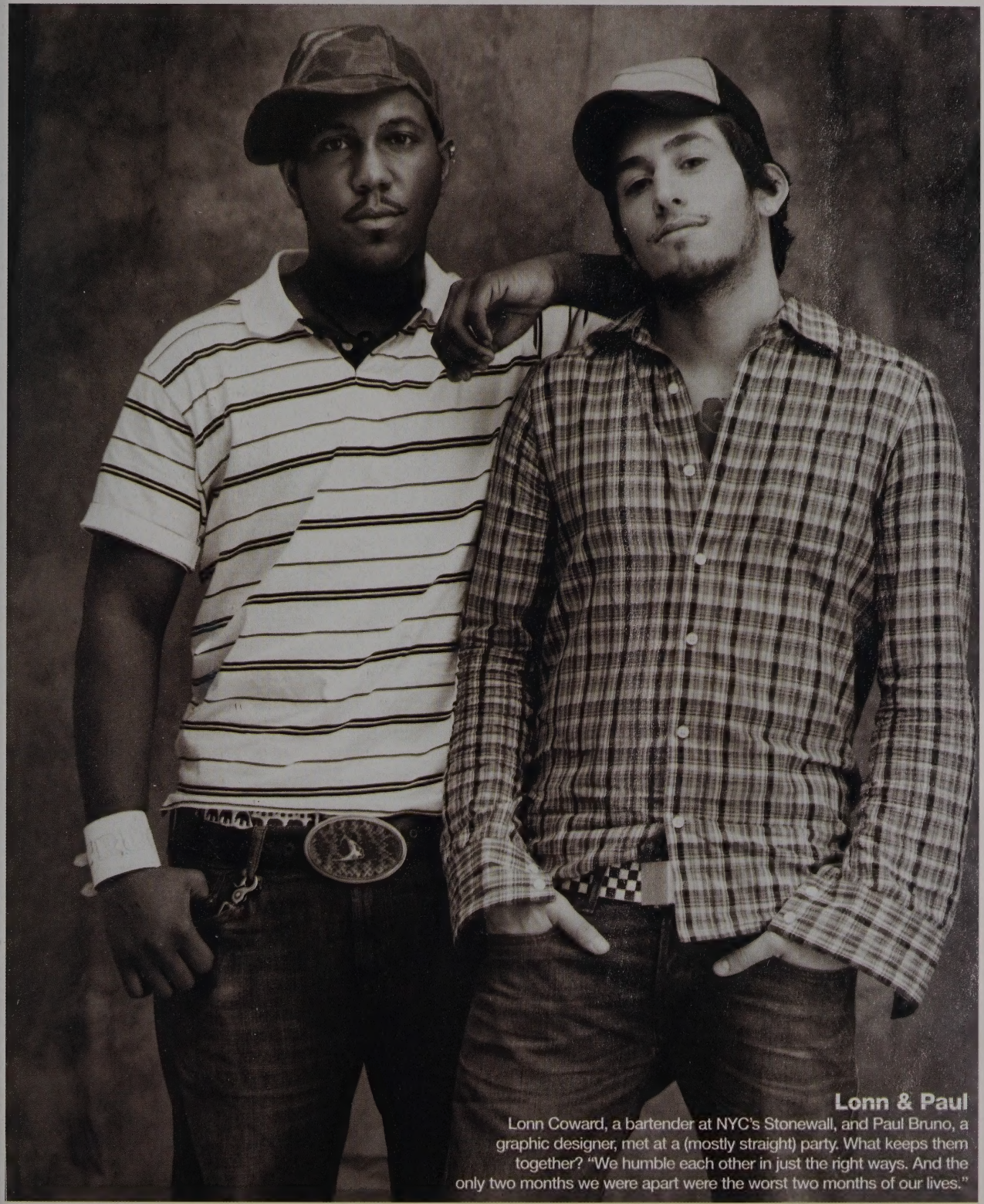
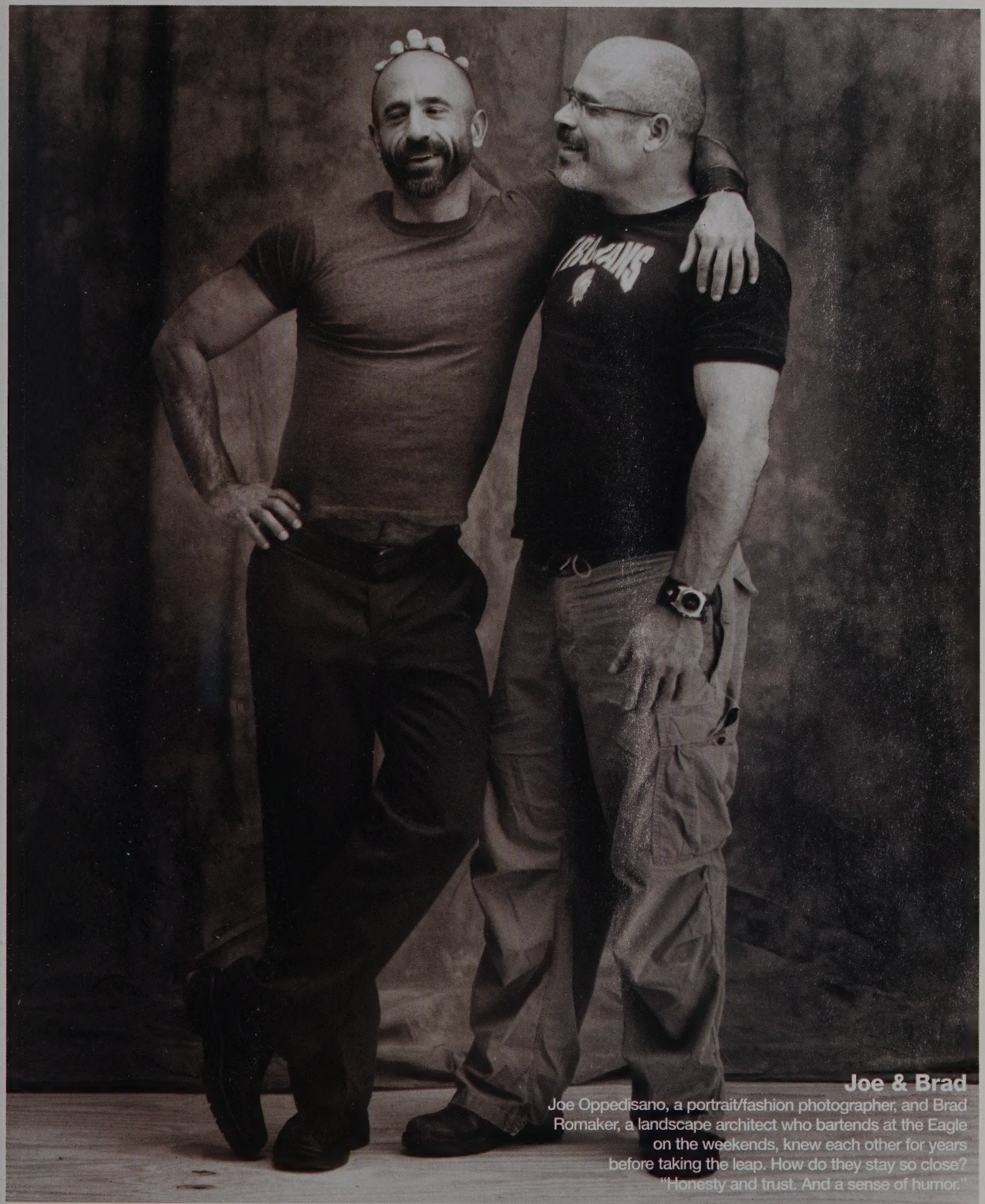


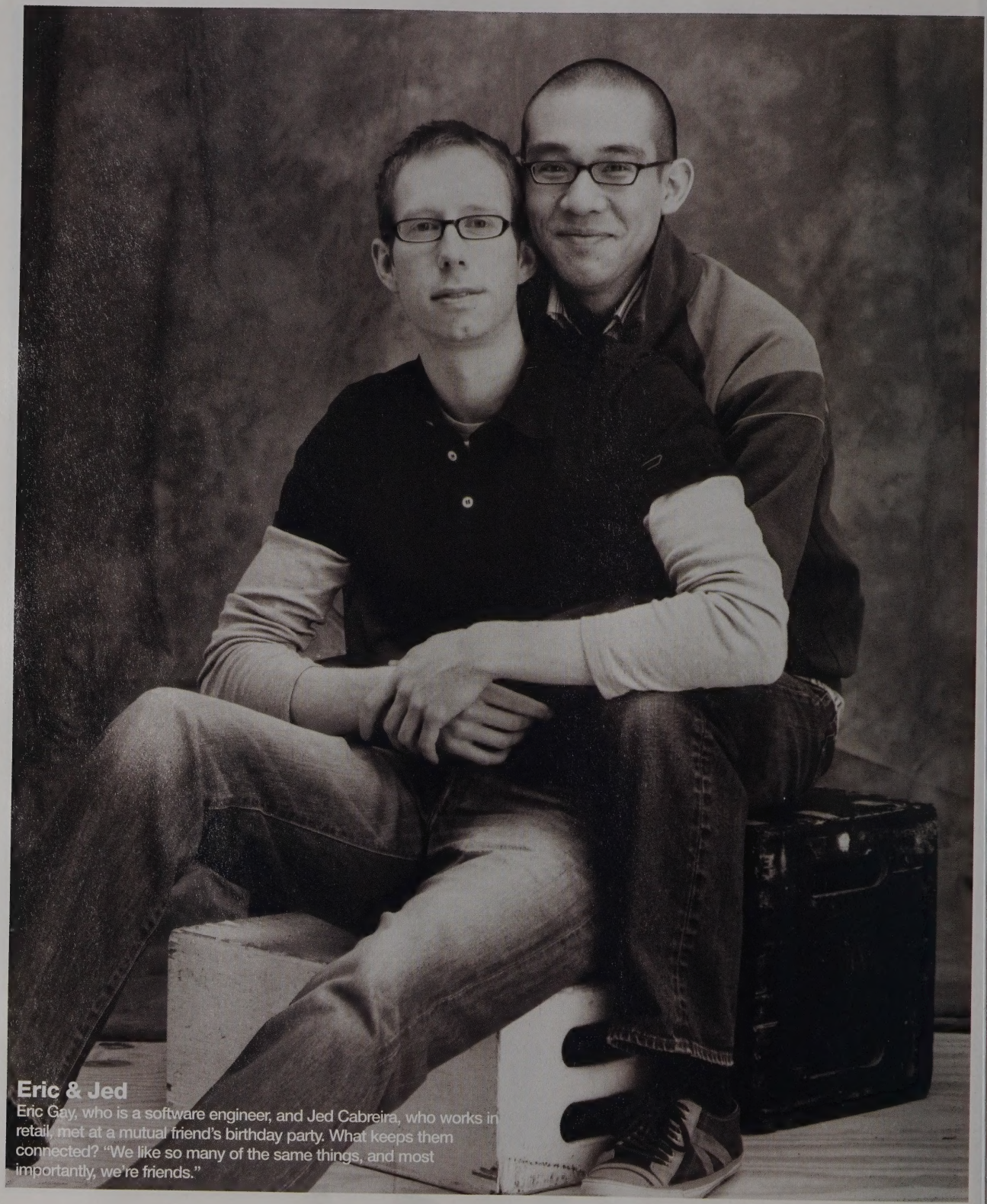
**Lonn & Paul**

Lonn Coward, a bartender at NYC's Stonewall, and Paul Bruno, a graphic designer, met at a (mostly straight) party. What keeps them together? "We humble each other in just the right ways. And the only two months we were apart were the worst two months of our lives."



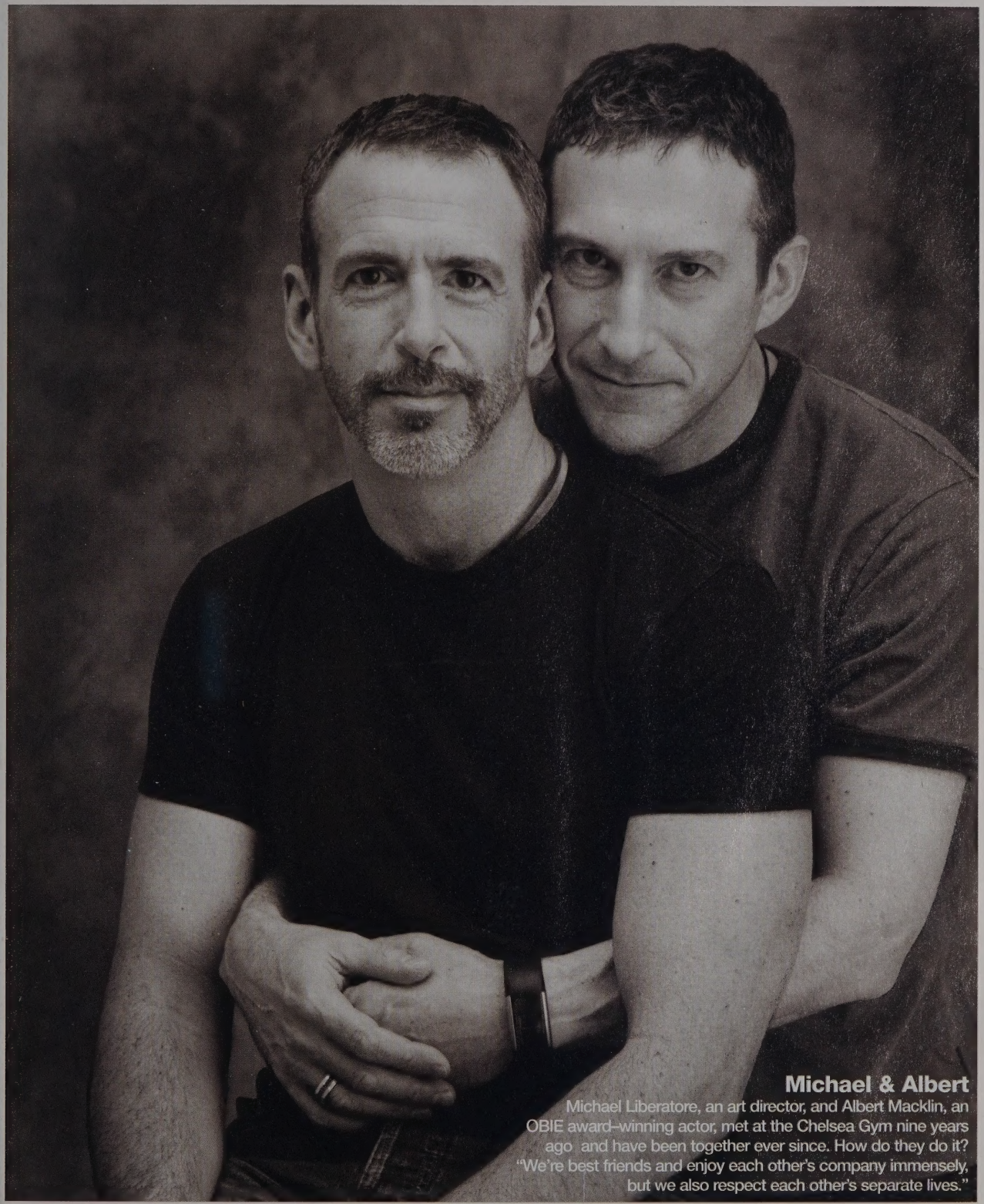
**Joe & Brad**

Joe Oppedisano, a portrait/fashion photographer, and Brad Romaker, a landscape architect who bartends at the Eagle on the weekends, knew each other for years before taking the leap. How do they stay so close? "Honesty and trust. And a sense of humor."



**Eric & Jed**

Eric Gay, who is a software engineer, and Jed Cabreira, who works in retail, met at a mutual friend's birthday party. What keeps them connected? "We like so many of the same things, and most importantly, we're friends."



**Michael & Albert**

Michael Liberatore, an art director, and Albert Macklin, an OBIE award–winning actor, met at the Chelsea Gym nine years ago and have been together ever since. How do they do it? "We're best friends and enjoy each other's company immensely, but we also respect each other's separate lives."

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**GiGi & Rayya**

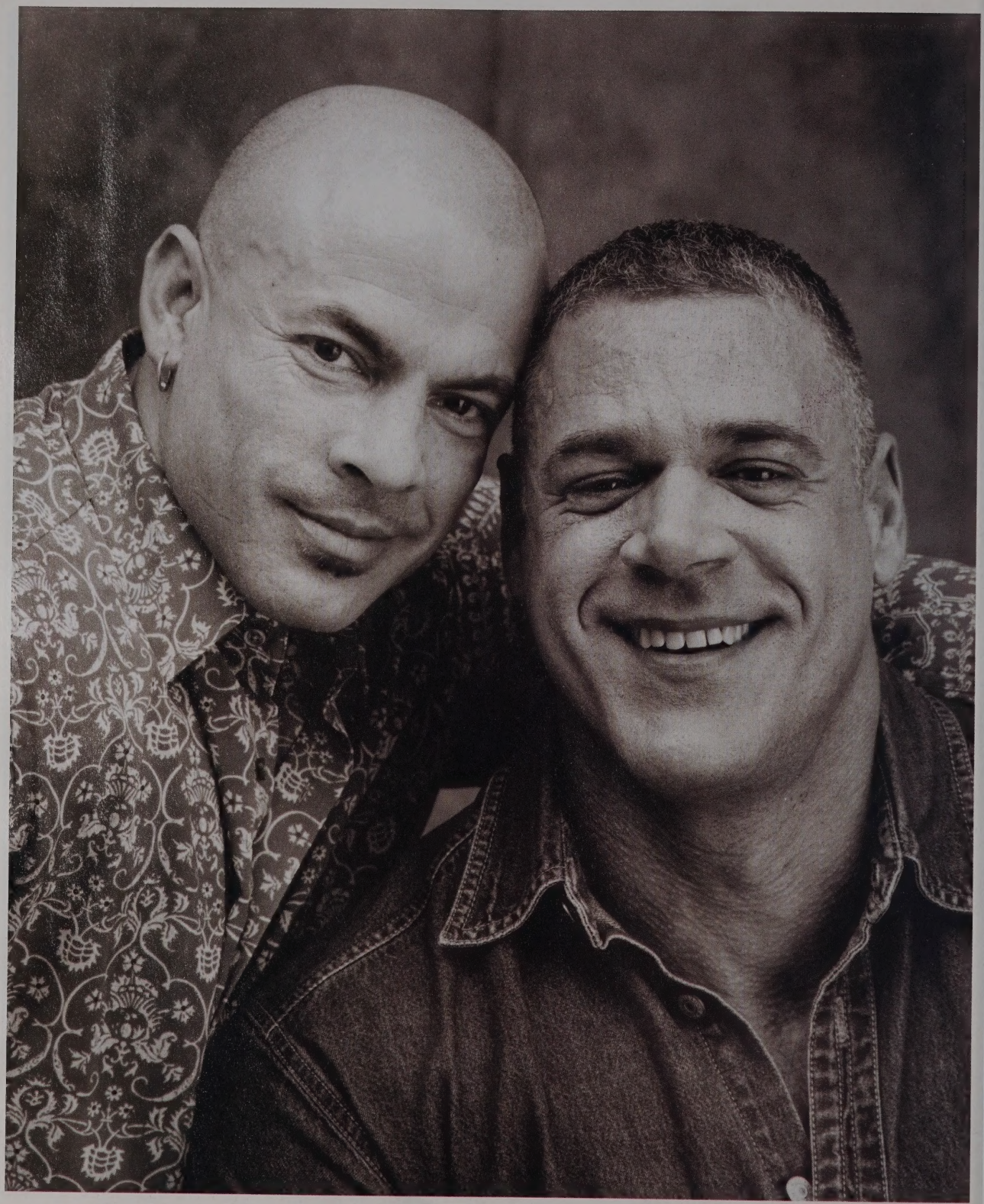
Rayya Elias, whose film "Anonymous" just premiered at NYC's Pioneer Theater, and GiGi Madl, a real estate broker, have been together four years, after Rayya saw GiGi perform a tango in black dress and combat boots. She was floored. "We encourage each other to dream big and make those dreams real, so we're always growing together."

**Derrick & Matt**

Derrick Little, a photographer and performance artist, and Matt Porter, a yoga instructor and PhD candidate in clinical psych, met in yoga class. What's their secret? "Communication, completely open communication. Plus white Tantric yoga!"

**Brigid & Lissa**

Brigid Scruggs, dedicated barista, and Lissa Fox, who is in publishing, met at the coffee shop where Brigid works. How do they maintain their relationship? "We address issues gently and immediately, instead of putting off the important conversations."



**Darin & Christian**

Darin Page and Christian Bouthillette, both personal trainers, met nine years ago when Christian came into the bar where Darin was bartending. What has kept them together all these years? "Each one of us feels that he has found the man of his dreams. We absolutely love each other."

The military may be the last state-sanctioned bastion of discrimination based on sexual orientation; nonetheless, gay men and women are still signing up and shipping out. Former Marine Sgt. **Tim Bergling** talks to a few of them about what it's like to live in the Camo Closet...

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# DON'T ASK DON'T TELL GOES to WAR

**"It was close, yeah…we almost didn't see 'em** before they had a chance to open up on us. But we saw people running, looking funny…figured there was something up. It didn't look right. Came around a bend in the road, and there they were, four, maybe five of 'em, just getting into firing position, so we let 'em have it first."

It's Spencer on the phone, and the strange mixture of exhaustion and exhilaration is evident in his voice, detectable even across the spotty, 7,000-mile connection between the telephone in my office and his satellite phone hookup from somewhere near Karbala, Iraq. Relief pours over me to know that he's ok. Like most Americans I was glued to the TV from the time hostilities began in March 2003 until ground troops moved in for the kill outside Baghdad in April. Knowing Spencer's role as a Marine grunt, I was sure he'd be right there, wherever the action was and bullets were flying…and knowing his gung-ho personality, I'd wondered about the crazy heroics he might take part in.

Sure enough, in our brief conversation he tells me about enough close calls to keep a worried friend sleepless for a week.

"Just last week I had some buddies get whacked by an RPG [rocket-propelled grenade] at a checkpoint I'd been through about five minutes before," he tells me matter-of-factly. "They all made it though, just some frag [shrapnel] wounds. Can't say the same about the guys who tried to take'em out…we found'em later, took care of business. Just another day in paradise, I guess."

His typical grunt's stoicism doesn't do much to dispel my concern, or my creeping guilt, knowing he's in harm's way while I'm safe and sound here in the States, my own Marine Corps days more than a dozen years past. I'd encouraged him to enlist, after all. In fact, that was how we met, through an online encounter when Spencer was just a high school kid in the South, a young man wondering if you could be gay and still be a "good Marine." Of course, I'd told him then, detailing the challenges, but also the not-inconsiderable benefits of a military career, never imagining for a second the momentous turn of events that lay ahead — September 11 and everything after.

I share a little of that guilty feeling with him, but Spencer is having none of it. "Fuck that noise," he says, laughing. "Man, this is awesome shit over here. This is what I was born to do."

"Spencer" isn't his real name, of course. He'll let me tell his story only on the condition that I disguise his identity. And who can blame him? Despite a sterling military record, now burnished by the fires of real combat, his lifelong dream of being a career Marine could still come to a crashing halt if anyone should find out that he's gay.

He's part of the first major wave of Americans to hit the beaches of a foreign land since the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy went into effect a decade ago. Born of a 1992 Clinton campaign promise to end the military's outright ban on gays and lesbians, DADT was supposed to be a grand compromise that allowed us all to serve honorably without harassment, as long as we kept our mouths shut and didn't scare the horses.

But a funny thing happened on the way to enlightenment. Turns out more folks have gotten the ol' boot in the ass under DADT than they did back when I wore the uniform in the '80's, back when the policy was simply "Don't!" According to figures compiled by the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, a national nonprofit watchdog organization, gay discharges increased in every year between 1994 and 2000 save one. How many people are we talking about? Let's see…in 1994, 617 people kicked out…in '95 it was 772…'96 saw 870 people say farewell to arms…1,007 got the big heave-ho in '97…you get the idea.

By 2001 discharges had topped 1200, but the numbers, impressive as they are, don't even begin to tell the whole story of witch hunts, shattered dreams and broken lives: an Air Force airman gets outed by another who strikes a deal with investigators at a base in Hawaii; he's discharged without ever being accused of anything but being gay. A Navy senior chief is found out when someone improperly traces his identity through his America Online profile; his case ends up in court, and he wins a dual settlement — one from the Navy, another from AOL for violating his privacy — but his military career is effectively over. A Marine serving in the Far East is discharged after his Navy counselor divulges his sexual orientation to his commanding officer; that discharge not only ends his dream of serving his country, but puts a separation between him and his family that lasts for years.

And in one of the most egregious cases, an Army soldier, Private First Class Barry Winchell, is beaten to death in his bunk by another soldier at Fort Campbell, Kentucky (Winchell had been dating a transsexual off base, and the resultant rumors had plagued him for months). Gay activists blame the military's queer-baiting attitudes and general intolerance of homosexuality for creating an atmosphere on base that allowed such a horrendous act to occur.

**More folks have gotten the ol' boot in the ass under DADT than they did when the policy was simply "Dont!"**

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Even those serving without experiencing such incidents, or who have concluded their service on good terms, talk about the institutionalized paranoia that DADT fosters. "I was happy when it went into effect, because I thought 'finally, I can let down my guard a little,'" says "Adam," now a master sergeant in the Air Force with 19 years in. "But the sad truth is, it's so much worse. When I first enlisted the brass could just look the other way in a lot of respects, since it

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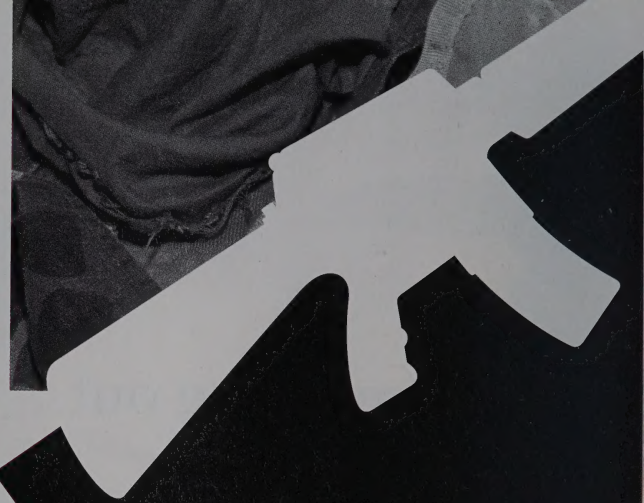

**Homosexual discharges took a tumble as the nation made war on the Taliban and geared up to launch an invasion of Iraq.**

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was just a given that there were no fags around. We all had to sign that little 'I ain't no homo' statement, so that was that unless you got caught or something. But after [DADT] everything changed…people started wondering who the fag might be, people starting rumors…a lot of us have started worrying about what might happen if anyone finds out."

Lara Ballard, 34, put in a four-year stint in the Army back in the early '90s, including time as a Tactical Control Officer on the PATRIOT Air Defense system in Kuwait; her service overlapped the before and after period of DADT. She tells a tale similar to Adam's. "I was, frankly, terrified of what would happen to me," she tells me now. "I had ZERO contact with any gay or lesbian servicemembers. The policy really had a chilling effect on people's ability to be open with each other. As a female officer in a combat arms specialty I was under constant suspicion for being a lesbian by the mere fact of not having a boyfriend or husband. People constantly tried to fix me up with their friends, soldiers asked me almost every week why I didn't have a boyfriend and when I was going to get married...People took great interest in my personal life, or lack thereof, for the four years I was on active duty…I'm a very open and honest person; my partner makes fun of me for my absolute inability to be deceptive or even 'coy.' It was devastating for someone like me to have to live like that, to lie every day."

And lying can be an absolute necessity. "Paul" tells me how he got caught up in a scandal about four years ago involving several gay sailors on a ship stationed in Norfolk, Virginia. "None of these guys ever did anything inappropriate on the job as far as I know, but the shore police spotted some of them outside a gay bar. That's all it took to get the rumors flying, and most of them were gone inside a year…I was constantly asked questions because I happened to know some of them. I had to make a lot of shit up to get past the investigation."

I ask Paul if he still feels nervous these days. "Not as much, no. The war really changed a lot of things. It's like we've got bigger fish to fry now."

To say that the military's harassment of gay and lesbian servicemembers has been put on hold in the aftermath of September 11 would be inaccurate. But neither would it be correct to say there's been no change at all. According to SLDN, homosexual discharges took a 30 pecent tumble in 2002, as the nation made war on the Taliban in Afghanistan and geared up to launch an invasion of Iraq.

"Historically, lesbian and gay discharges decrease significantly during times of war or conflict, says Steve Ralls, an SLDN spokesman. "This was true in the first Gulf War, during Vietnam, the Korean War, even as far back as WWII." But he says there's been no move to wipe DADT off the books, or even suspend it. "From a legal perspective it continues to be the law of the land, and commanders are still instructed, even during wartime, to discharge lesbian, gay and bisexual service members. Stop-loss orders issued during both the Afghan conflict and the war in Iraq specifically exempt lesbian and gay discharges — meaning discharges on the basis of sexual orientation are to continue without interruption."

Ralls cites several cases that show the military still means business, even when it runs counter to mission effectiveness, or just plain common sense, such as the discharge of gay linguists schooled in languages such as Arabic, Korean and Farsi, the very lexicon of the Bush Administration's "Axis of Evil."

"At last count, three dozen such language specialists had been fired for being gay, despite a severe shortage of linguists throughout the military," he tells me. He also submits the case of Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade Jen Kopfstein, a trusted officer aboard the USS Shiloh, a guided missile cruiser. Somehow she managed to perform her duties on ship as an "out" lesbian, gaining plaudits and recognition for her skills. The ship's captain recognized all her abilities in her final fitness report, and even went so far as to state that her "sexual orientation has not disrupted good order and discipline" on board the vessel, calling her "an asset to the ship and the Navy"; still, he concluded "unfortunately her sexual orientation precludes further Naval service." Kopfstein was discharged in 2002.

But at a time when active duty servicemen and women are finding their tours of duty involuntarily extended indefinitely, and the Army alone is contemplating adding some 30,000 troops to its ranks to help shore up flagging enlistments, one wonders how long the military can continue to gut its own ranks. Certainly there are voices for change. Last year retired Navy Rear Admiral John D. Hutson, who served as the Navy's judge advocate general, called the military's ban on gay and lesbian servicemembers "virtually unworkable." In a *National Law Journal* interview Hutson said DADT was a "bad compromise" that "demeans the military as an honorable institution." On the tenth anniversary of DADT, *The Washington Post* opined about what it called "a failed policy," calling for its repeal: "The gay ban is a simple matter of discrimination, of denying people opportunities to serve because of an aspect of their lives that cannot plausibly be said to bear on their true fitness for duty."

In a December 2003 interview with *The New York Times*, three retired flag officers — Army Brigadier Generals Keith Kerr and Virgil Richard, and Coast Guard Rear Admiral Alan Steinman — all denounced DADT. The highest ranking former military members to ever

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come out publicly, they blasted DADT for undermining the military's core values of truth, honor, dignity, respect and integrity. And in interviews this year with *The Advocate* and the *Washington Blade*, retired General Wesley Clark, former NATO Commander and 2004 Democratic Presidential Candidate, said it's clear that DADT is not working. "The armed forces are the last institution in America that discriminates against people. It ought to be the first that doesn't," Clark told *The Advocate*. "[People] ought to have the right to be who they are. They shouldn't have to conceal their identities…the British have a model, and there is no impact on combat readiness. It's a bogus issue."

What's the official military response to such calls for change? Not much, I'm afraid. I contacted the Department of Defense to get their take on the shifting attitudes about DADT; they referred me to the "relative statutes," pointing out that the military is simply complying with a federal law passed by Congress and signed by the president. Asked about the retired generals and admirals who decry DADT and call for its abolishment, the DOD spokesman said that "individuals who are retired or who are no longer a part of the armed forces are free to speak of their experiences and express their views. Again, the military policy implements a public law." And what about those who say it's foolish to let anyone go in a time of global war, with America's security at risk, simply because they're gay? The DOD's answer: "Commanders in the field continue to comply with the provisions of the statute."

Glad they cleared that up. Still, there are signs that on the extreme local level where the rubber hits the road, some military units, and even recruiters, are giving DADT a middle-finger salute, despite the dictates from the Pentagon.

Josh, a 24-year-old in Houston, tells me about the day he got a call from a Marine Corps recruiter. "I told the guy that I didn't think I was the guy he was looking for," Josh recalls, laughing. "So he asked me why. I thought a second, then just said 'don't ask, don't tell.' I thought that would kind of end our conversation.

"But all he says is 'well boy, don't tell, and I won't ask. So I am going to send you out some information on the Marines, and you just look it over and I'll get back in touch with you, all right?' It was just kind of surreal."

"Rod" just got back from deployment in Afghanistan, where his unit saw heavy action from Taliban remnants and insurgent forces. "Would I say I was 'out'? Not exactly…but I wouldn't say I was exactly 'in,' either. Pretty much everyone knew or suspected, even some of the officers, and if anyone asked me I'd just smile. What's the worst they're going to do, send me home? Yeah, like that would have sucked. But seriously, I was surprised at how little problem anyone had. People made jokes, like the kind you only make with your friends. And we were pretty tight, so it was all good. I think the folks in charge over here figure if you're doing your job, it doesn't matter who you like to sleep with."

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**"I'm doing what I've always wanted to do, serving my country in the Marine Corps. Anyone that has a problem with that because I like boys can kiss my ass."**

"It's all in your situation," says "Barry," a combat Marine who was among the first to enter Baghdad, in April 2003. "My first advice to any gay Marine or soldier would be to not be out at all, because you really don't know how people around you are going to react if they find out. But the young people that join the services now aren't the same ones that were here when [DADT] first happened…we grew up watching all the gay stuff on TV and the culture in general. For a lot of people being gay isn't a big deal, and it sure as fuck isn't for me."

That brings me back to Spencer, who came to peace with "the gay thing" pretty early on, and realized once he'd enlisted that he'd be surrounded by "more hot men" than he'd ever been around. "The Marine Corps infantry is a very homoerotic world," he tells me. "I get my ass slapped and dick grabbed on a daily basis. We joke around for fun; hell, we're guys." So I have to ask him a question I realize that I have never put to him before: What does he think about Don't Ask, Don't Tell?

His answer is both simple and complex. He actually supports DADT, but only because the Marine Corps he serves can still be a dangerous place to be out. "We work in very close proximity and quarters, and whether we like it or not, some people are still very uncomfortable with homosexuality," he says. "I'm not happy about it, but that's the way it is…if the guys knew there was a gay guy in their platoon it could cause some serious problems…since no one else would want to be seen as gay, the gay guy could get ganged up on...and if some ignorant asshole wants to say some stupid shit, I'm not going to risk outting myself to put him in his place."

But what about those who say gay people aren't fit to serve? I wonder how he feels when he hears their comments, especially since just months after returning home from Iraq, he's getting ready to re-deploy in just a few weeks. "Look, there have always been, are now, and always will be gays in the military. We're just like any other gay guys, except we don't make a big deal out of being gay. But why do that anyway? It's no one's business if I'm gay or straight. I'm doing what I've always wanted to do, serving my country in the Marine Corps. Anybody that has a problem with that because I like boys can kiss my ass."

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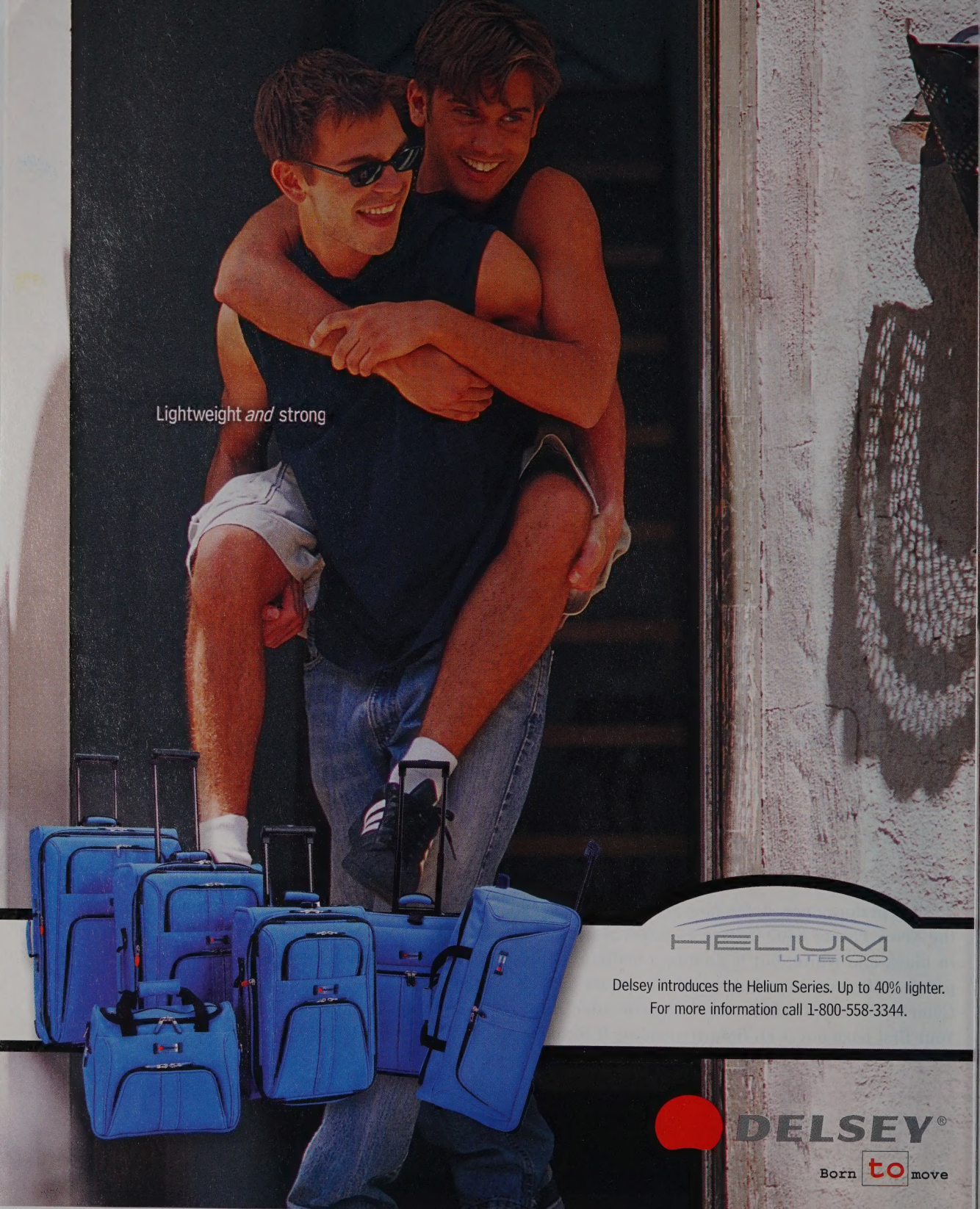
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# HIV: A NEW FRONT IN THE CONTINUING BATTLE

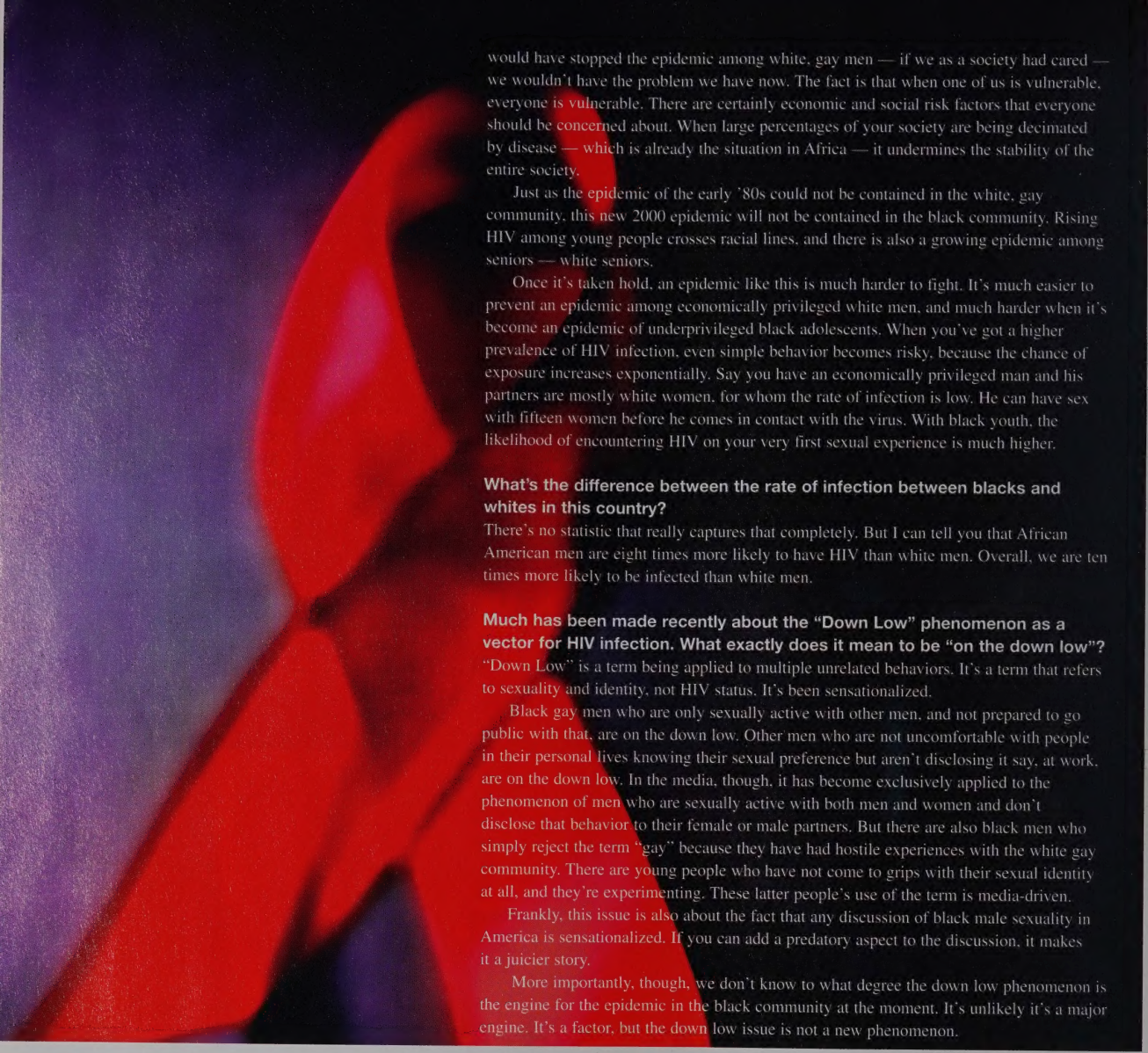
The AIDS Crisis is most assuredly not over. **Phill Wilson**, Executive Director of the Black AIDS Institute explains that the disease is destroying the African American Community — and why you should care...

**How did you end up doing this?**
I'm a person with AIDS. I've been infected for 24 years, 14 years with full-blown AIDS. I lost my first lover to this disease in '89. This disease is disproportionately represented in African-Americans, and I feel very strongly that in order to stop it in the black community, the effort is going to have to come from independent, black organizations.

**Why, when there are already so many AIDS service and advocacy organizations?**
There really needs to be a credible, black source to mobilize this community.

**How did it come to be that AIDS and HIV have had such an outsized impact on African Americans?**
The black community was slow to respond the epidemic. One reason is that all the messages about AIDS led people to think it was a white, gay disease. Another reason is that black organizations continue to suffer from a lack of resources. And, of course, there is a stigma and resulting denial around AIDS in all communities. By comparison, white communities, in general, do not have as many other social issues competing for attention. The unemployment problem is not as pronounced, there's not the incarceration rate. You have health disparities, education disparities between whites and blacks. There's "driving while black." These things don't go away because of AIDS. We're still fighting battles on affirmative action, gentrification of our neighborhoods and the resulting displacement of our communities. We still have to deal with those problems as well as AIDS. All these factors have contributed to a slow response within the community and an even slower response to funding.

**So why should white people — or people of other socio-economic groups — care about this problem if it's mainly affecting black people?**
If we have learned anything from our past, we have learned that the reason we have this epidemic is that we did nothing when AIDS was perceived as a disease affecting marginalized groups. If we



would have stopped the epidemic among white, gay men — if we as a society had cared — we wouldn't have the problem we have now. The fact is that when one of us is vulnerable, everyone is vulnerable. There are certainly economic and social risk factors that everyone should be concerned about. When large percentages of your society are being decimated by disease — which is already the situation in Africa — it undermines the stability of the entire society.

Just as the epidemic of the early '80s could not be contained in the white, gay community, this new 2000 epidemic will not be contained in the black community. Rising HIV among young people crosses racial lines, and there is also a growing epidemic among seniors — white seniors.

Once it's taken hold, an epidemic like this is much harder to fight. It's much easier to prevent an epidemic among economically privileged white men, and much harder when it's become an epidemic of underprivileged black adolescents. When you've got a higher prevalence of HIV infection, even simple behavior becomes risky, because the chance of exposure increases exponentially. Say you have an economically privileged man and his partners are mostly white women, for whom the rate of infection is low. He can have sex with fifteen women before he comes in contact with the virus. With black youth, the likelihood of encountering HIV on your very first sexual experience is much higher.

**What's the difference between the rate of infection between blacks and whites in this country?**

There's no statistic that really captures that completely. But I can tell you that African American men are eight times more likely to have HIV than white men. Overall, we are ten times more likely to be infected than white men.

**Much has been made recently about the "Down Low" phenomenon as a vector for HIV infection. What exactly does it mean to be "on the down low"?**

"Down Low" is a term being applied to multiple unrelated behaviors. It's a term that refers to sexuality and identity, not HIV status. It's been sensationalized.

Black gay men who are only sexually active with other men, and not prepared to go public with that, are on the down low. Other men who are not uncomfortable with people in their personal lives knowing their sexual preference but aren't disclosing it say, at work, are on the down low. In the media, though, it has become exclusively applied to the phenomenon of men who are sexually active with both men and women and don't disclose that behavior to their female or male partners. But there are also black men who simply reject the term "gay" because they have had hostile experiences with the white gay community. There are young people who have not come to grips with their sexual identity at all, and they're experimenting. These latter people's use of the term is media-driven.

Frankly, this issue is also about the fact that any discussion of black male sexuality in America is sensationalized. If you can add a predatory aspect to the discussion, it makes it a juicier story.

More importantly, though, we don't know to what degree the down low phenomenon is the engine for the epidemic in the black community at the moment. It's unlikely it's a major engine. It's a factor, but the down low issue is not a new phenomenon.

**What's the Black Aids Institute planning for the coming year?**

We're looking for more ways to mobilize traditional institutions. We're focusing on black media, civil rights organizations, faith communities, neighborhood organizations, fraternities and sororities, and looking at ways they can address the HIV issue. We are reaching out to help develop a capacity and infrastructure to respond to the epidemic. There is also certainly a role for people who are not of this community to provide support, but whenever a culture or community has turned something like this around, it's been because that community itself developed the commitment. What's great is that there has been a tremendous amount of action recently with Black churches, the Black media and Hip Hop artists, especially the women associated with the *Ladies First* tour: Beyonce, Missy Elliot and Alicia Keyes have agreed to host Town Halls to encourage people to get tested — if you agree to get tested, you get a free ticket to the show. We're also doing a PSA campaign with LL Cool J, Missy Elliot and Snoop Dogg, among others.

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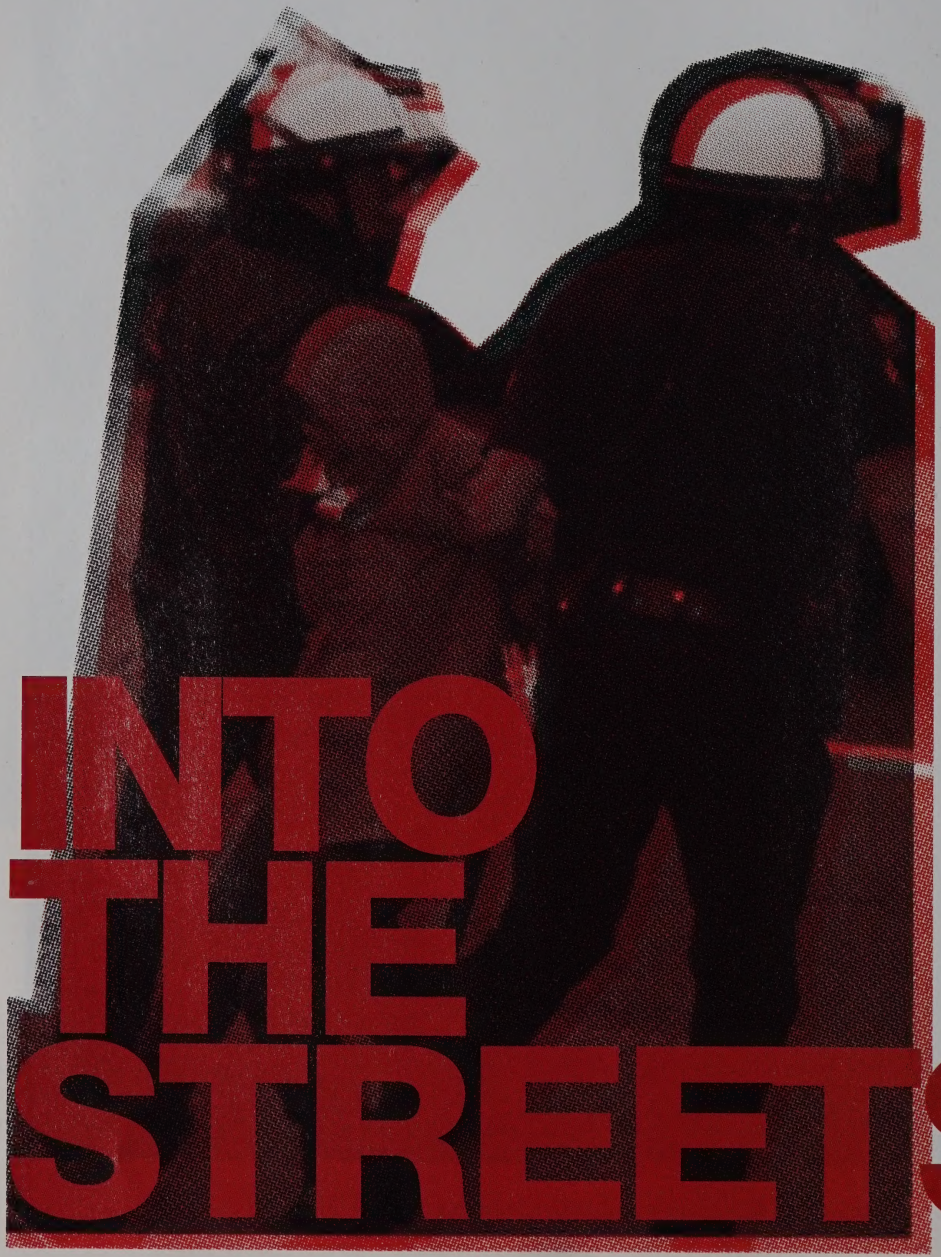


# INTO THE STREETS...

We aren't always such "a gentle, angry people." In fact, sometimes we're downright dangerous. **Mubarak Dahir** reports on what happens when Gay Anger turns into Gay Rage...

Slumped on the couch in the coop where he lived, Joey Cain, then a 23-year-old coffeehouse worker who had moved from Albany, NY, to be part of the great gay exodus to San Francisco, was initially ambivalent when the TV show he was watching was interrupted by a special newsbreak reporting the verdict on the killer of openly gay supervisor Harvey Milk and SF Mayor George Moscone.

Like everyone else in SF, Cain knew the decision was to be announced on that day, May 21, 1979. Even before the sober anchor appeared on the TV screen, Cain had heard the outrageous verdict: Dan White, the former city supervisor and police officer who six months earlier had entered City Hall with a gun, shot the mayor point blank, then reloaded his weapon and shot Milk, had been found not guilty of first-degree murder. The defense had gotten away with one of the most absurd arguments in the history of the courts. Dubbed the "Twinkie Defense," the claim was that White was not responsible for his actions because he was suffering from severe depression, brought on at least in part by eating too much junk food. White ended up being sentenced to a total of just seven years for two murders.

Days before the verdict, posters had been plastered all over the Castro calling for a march from the gay neighborhood to the Civic Center — either to celebrate justice or to protest its elusiveness, depending on the outcome of the trial. At first, Cain couldn't bring himself to care about the demonstration. "I thought it was just going to be a bunch of people lighting candles in front of City Hall," recalls Cain, now 48. "I didn't want to be part of another 'We are a peaceful, loving people' kind of event." But what Cain witnessed on the screen in front of him quickly piqued his interest: The television cameras showed angry crowds throwing bricks and shattering the windows at City Hall.

"When I saw people were angry and not behaving like nice little boys, I thought, 'Oh my God, I want to be part of this!'" Scrambling to his feet, Cain jumped on the next bus to the heart of the action that later became known as the White Night Riot. "This was the kind of response I thought made sense."

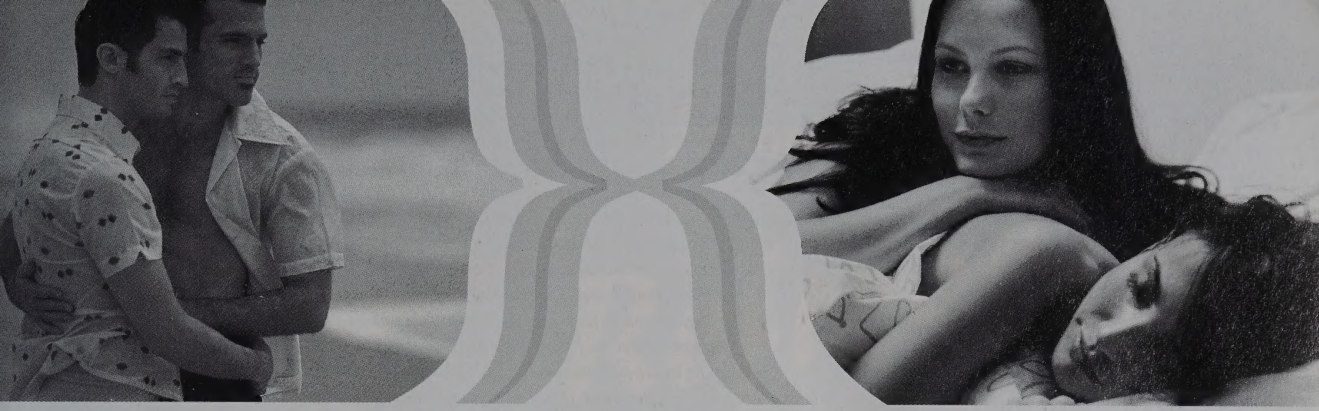
Violence making sense? It's impolitic today to acknowledge that civil rights agendas can, and indeed have been, advanced by the riotous behavior of angry crowds. "Today, violence is wrong and it would defame our community rather than advance it," says Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Lesbian and Gay Task Force, invoking the current party line. "It would backfire on anyone who engaged in it."

But the history of civil rights — including the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender movement — is full of examples of group violence that, at times, did much to further the cause. "Yes, there are times when violence is useful in advancing a civil rights movement," admits Craig Rimmerman, author of *From Identity to Politics: The Lesbian and Gay Movements in the United States*, and a professor of political science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York state. "You see this frequently in the history of African-American civil rights where people felt their only recourse was some act of violence."

The classic example in gay liberation, of course, is the Stonewall Riots in NYC in June 1969, when a group of mostly disenfranchised hustlers and drag queens reached their limit of police extortion at the Stonewall Inn. The weary patrons not only confronted the police, but ended up barricading a few of New York's finest in the bar with them, and giving them a piece of their collective mind. The melee sparked an ensuing three days of riots and protests that are famously looked upon as the beginning of the modern gay civil rights era.

Mark Segal, publisher of the *Philadelphia Gay News*, was an idealistic 18-year-old living in NYC's East Village at the time of the riots. That night, he and several friends were doing their regular round of bars along Christopher Street when they happened upon the disturbance at the Stonewall.

"The police hadn't blocked off the place yet," recalls Segal. "We saw there was some commotion, and we saw police run into the bar and start dragging a few people off and carting them away," he says. By then, a small band of fed-up gay men had gathered in front of the bar and were cursing at police. Segal joined in screaming at them. "Then there was a lot of pushing, and a few of the police got shoved into the bar." ▶



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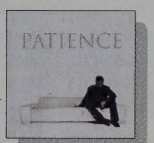


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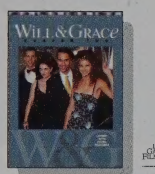


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That's when things changed from just another pay-off raid, to a historic moment. The police called in reinforcements, but the crowd both inside and outside the bar had had enough. People were throwing objects at the police, and at the door of the bar, recalls Segal. "I have a distinct memory of watching two drag queens rock free a loose parking meter out of the ground and hurl it at the bar," he says, with glee in his voice.

Stonewall changed the trajectory of gay and lesbian civil rights forever; even those who denounce the use of violence today are loathe to criticize Stonewall or other such incidents.

"There's no doubt that Stonewall, White Night, and other multiple acts were critical in moving us forward at the time," concedes Foreman. "Sometimes, it takes a catalyst moment to garner attention and highlight injustice."

Segal seems to have a razor-sharp memory of the evening, until asked if he joined in tossing objects at the police. "I don't quite remember, I'm a little fuzzy on that," he demurs, keeping in line with the modern interpretation that taking part in violent acts is frowned upon. "I might have. I mean, we were all full of adrenaline." At any rate, Segal, like most gay and lesbian leaders today, is clear in his defense of the violence. "I am proud of every individual who took part in those three nights of riots," he says emphatically. "At the time, there was an absolute need for it. We were blackmailed and bullied and felt like we had no alternative. You don't think that's a reason for violence?"

**That's when things changed from just another pay-off raid, to a historic moment. The police called in reinforcements, but the crowd both inside and outside the bar had had enough.**

Of course, as part of the reluctance to endorse violence, and perhaps as a way to rationalize it, many leaders in the gay and lesbian movement quibble over the very definition of the word.

"Violence is such a charged word," insists Jack Davis, 53, a long-time activist in SF and Radical Faerie who now works for a company that sells sex toys around the country. "The destruction of property has always been a grey area. For some people" — including him — "that isn't considered violence."

Davis was part of the October 23, 1991, riot that left SF's recently renovated State Building on fire, its windows smashed out. Then-governor Pete Wilson had just vetoed a sweeping gay rights bill, and in response, a furious crowd gathered to express their outrage at the building on Golden Gate Avenue that symbolized state government.

"I was very pissed off," remembers Davis, who went to the site "because I felt I needed to take to the streets. This was one blow we couldn't suffer. We needed to let people know just how furious we were."

The mob that gathered in front of the building began chanting "Gay rights or gay riots!" and hurling rocks at both the building and the few police there who normally guarded the entrance. "We were cheering the destruction of the building," says Davis. "I do feel like that response was appropriate."

People seized leftover construction materials conveniently left in front of the State Building and used them as projectiles to shatter windows. Some idle two-by-fours were used as makeshift ladders for people to climb through broken windows and into the building, where rioters charged through it and eventually set it ablaze.

"Broken windows were minor compared to what we'd been through," defends Davis, who says he didn't throw any bricks, but admits that even if he had, he wouldn't tell a reporter. "When people take to the streets, you can't tell them not to do stuff like that. When people riot, the logical part of their brain doesn't work. It's not about any kind of larger civil rights strategy. It's more visceral. It's about expressing your emotions."

Initially, the police "stepped back and weren't intervening," says Davis. Later, however, some people were arrested after being identified through video footage of the rampage.

Though it's hard to say just what issue might crystallize gays and lesbians to take to the streets today or in the future, Davis believes it will — and probably should — happen again. "The time for being in the streets and rioting isn't over."

Most activists, however, lay much of the blame for violence that erupts in the streets on the police. ▶

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"If you call this a riot, then you have to call it a police riot," says long-time NYC activist Ann Northrop, 55. It was an unusually cold October 19, 1998 when she and her then-girlfriend made their way to the square in front of the Plaza Hotel at Fifth Avenue and 59th Street at 6pm. The two were responding to an Internet call for a "political funeral" for slain Wyoming student Matthew Shepard. The plan was to assemble at the Plaza, and make their way down Fifth Avenue to Madison Square Park, where a memorial and a few speeches were planned.

Organizers had declined to apply for a city permit. "There's a long history of not requesting permits from the police on the grounds that we have a constitutional right to assemble," explains Northrop.

The lack of a permit contributed to the confrontational tone that police took from the outset. Furthermore, the turnout that night vastly surpassed the organizers' expectations. They thought a few hundred people would show up. Instead, an estimated 6,000 converged on the spot. There simply wasn't enough room for all the people, who ended up spilling out from the sidewalks onto the street and strangling traffic.

As soon as the marchers stepped off the sidewalks, the police moved in and arrested the organizers. While this might have been meant as a calculated display of power, it proved disastrous: "It was a bad strategy by the cops, because it left no one in control," says Northrop. Thousands of people were now on the streets, cold and on edge, without any leaders.

As the crowd moved down Fifth Ave., the police began "arresting and manhandling" people, recounts Northrop. They even stopped city buses, cleared them of passengers and used them as temporary "holding cells." Before the evening was over, more than 120 people were arrested.

But the crowd refused to disperse, and throughout the evening played cat and mouse with police. As legions of cops in riot gear tried to force demonstrators down side streets, the crowd would surge to Sixth Ave. and then wind its way back again to Fifth. At one point, there were violent clashes with horse-mounted officers, and scores of demonstrators ended up bloodied.

"It was a huge fight all the way down" to Madison Square Park, says Northrop. But, after more than two hours dodging and battling the police, much of the crowd did make it to the park, where a few speeches were belted out.

While Northrop places the blame for the violence that day squarely on the shoulders of the police, she admits that the history of the gay rights movement has sometimes witnessed violence on the part of protestors. "Stonewall and the White Night march were clearly a violent reaction" to circumstances of the day. "I don't know if it's appropriate to support that kind of violence. But I'm reluctant to say those people did anything wrong. Sure, theoretically, you say no to violence. But practically… well, I don't know."

**The police moved in and arrested the march organizers — leaving thousands of people in the streets cold, on edge and out of control.**

Joey Cain knows, and all these years later, he remains unapologetic about the White Night Riot and his role in it.

Twenty minutes after he saw the scenes of mayhem on his TV screen, Cain stepped off a bus at the corner of Van Ness and Market Streets, and into history. The first thing he saw was a group of protestors lifting a large stone trashcan container, getting ready to toss it through the window of the Bank of America building.

"I immediately went over and helped them! It felt fabulous!" he says. "People were celebrating. There was a sense of camaraderie." He could hear the sound of breaking glass as rioters roamed up and down Market Street destroying windows. By the time he reached the Civic Center, "the building was lit up by surrounding police cars that had been set on fire." People were throwing bottles at the police, and the cops were clubbing people.

"It was incredibly frightening and energizing at the same time," says Cain. "I am not a pacifist. The gay community had relied on the system, and it failed us tremendously that day. I believe we had the right to fight back that way. It gave us a tremendous sense of empowerment."

"I threw bricks and I have no second thoughts or regrets — except maybe that I wish I could have set a police car on fire, too."

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# The Return of Jobriath

***Over thirty years ago, rock got its first out, loud and proud icon in the person of Jobriath, 26-year-old singer/songwriter Bruce Wayne Campbell. Ten years later, Wayne was dead of AIDS, his legacy consigned to the dust heap of rock'n'roll also-rans. But critics and fans alike are taking a new look (and listen) to the work of rock's first "true fairy."*** ***Nisha Gopalan*** ***reports…***

BOB GRUEN_STAR FILE

Worn and preoccupied, Stanley Bard, manager of Manhattan's Chelsea Hotel for over 40 years, is loath to indulge another question about the bohemian haven's bittersweet history. Prodded, he'll dust off memories of mythic tenants such as Dylan and Baez, Mapplethorpe and Bowie and yes, Sid and Nancy — but it's talk of one little-known artist that softens him up. "He was a lovely guy…. I knew he had some form of AIDS," Bard says. "We didn't see him for a while, so I sent someone up there. If I recall, he was by his piano, collapsed."

The lovely guy is glam musician Jobriath, an openly gay phenom who blazed a trail of glitter and hype through the '73 rock scene. He would be, it was promised, the American Bowie. Yet there he lay, ten years later at age 36, sequestered in his hidden, pyramid-shaped apartment atop the Chelsea, his lifeless body found after four days.

Long forgotten, Jobriath might be poised to make a comeback. At press time, there are at least two Jobriath books in the works (one by English journalist Rob Cochrane, the other by U.S. journalist Steven Gdula), a documentary (from VH1 producer Lisa Fancher), a feature film (cowritten by ex-bandmate Hayden Wayne) and two retrospective albums (one assembled by Wayne, the other curated by singer Morrissey for Rhino Records). Such analytic attention is an ironic addendum to the superficial public life of this rock-star Icarus who vaulted promisingly towards fame, only to plunge in shambles into obscurity.

Ask anyone about Jobriath's meteoric rise and fall and they'll point to one man: ex-manager Jerry Brandt. "This is the most amazing thing that ever happened to me," says Brandt, now 66, retired and living in Florida. "I've handled tons of artists in my day, but this one just dies and keeps coming back." An indefatigable impresario with a perennial itch to move on to the next great project, Brandt has been credited with opening NYC's legendary disco The Electric Circus, discovering Carly Simon and jump-starting the designer-jean craze with the French Jean Store. He stumbled upon Jobriath's demo tape after it was discarded by CBS Records' Clive Davis, convinced he'd hit the motherlode with this gentle-natured *Hair* alum with a penchant for partying and the musical aptitude of a classical pianist. The deal was swift: Brandt played the tape for David Geffen, then head of Elektra; Geffen loved it and Elektra signed his protégé. The figure was an astonishing $300K–$500K. Says Brandt, laughing: "If you fall in love with a woman and she wants a fur coat, you buy her fur. I was Jobriath's pimp. He seduced me."

But Brandt wasn't exactly getting short-changed. Fist full of dollars, he funneled $100K into New York City publicity. In addition to magazine ads and bus posters, he erected a notorious Times Square billboard which spanned 41-feet by 43-feet and was bordered by stage lights. It featured the cover from Jobriath's self-titled debut — a stunning image of the artist lying on his stomach, his lower half a broken nude statue — and the words "Jerry Brandt Presents…Jobriath."

That was just the start. Brandt forged an aggressive don't-miss-out campaign, in which he urged Jobriath to out himself as "the true fairy" (which he did) and spun outlandish claims, chief among them that his client's first concert would take place at the Paris Opera House where he'd impersonate King Kong and scale a 40-foot replica of the Empire State Building. The show never happened, of course. "The press was subjected to this insulting avalanche of exaggeration," says Danny Fields, a music-industry vet who's worked with The Doors, The Stooges and The Ramones, and was at that time editor of *16* magazine. Brandt swore to him that Jobriath would make the front page of the *New York Times*. "He said this was bigger than the moon landing. I was turned off. Someone had too much to smoke."

Fields wasn't alone. The album —a vaudevillian convergence of Elton John, Mick Jagger and David Bowie — earned positive reviews from the likes of *Rolling Stone,* while others such as *Esquire* dismissed it as hype. It sold dismally. "It was thought of as putting too much emphasis on image. Rock critics would make fun of him," says music critic Jim Farber. "And no one would admit that it may have had something to do with the fact that he was gay."

Sexuality was always a nagging issue for Jobriath. With encouragement from his devout

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stepmother, the former Bruce Wayne Campbell embraced Christianity as a teen in Pennsylvania. (His biblical-sounding name Jobriath is a throwback to those days.) "I think he found his homosexual impulses hard to handle because his attitudes at the time were very conservative and religious," says half-brother William Fogle. Jobriath went to great lengths to avoid the unavoidable, squiring around a girlfriend and even joining the Army to placate his father. After a few months, he left the military and with it any pretense of being straight.

In the early '70s, Bowie was also riding a wave of expectation that hinged on his sexuality. His Ziggy Stardust theatrics brilliantly tapped into the zeitgeist — a post-Vietnam War America pining for gestures of physical liberation. A shrewd and cool performance artist, his androgyny seemed like a rendering of bisexuality. Jobriath, on the other hand, exploded with queer pride. Wayne, keyboardist for the frontman's band, The Creatures, notes their appearance on *The Midnight Special*, a late-night TV show: "He came out like Marlene Dietrich as a leather boy [to perform the S&M song 'Take Me I'm Yours'], drinking beer and dancing with a chair — doing this whole thing she did in *Blue Angel*. It was like that scene from *The Producers* after 'Springtime for Hitler' when the camera pans and everyone's agape." Suffice it to say the producers nixed that song in favor of, oh, anything else.

Though not the first "out" musician (that title goes to folk balladeer Steve Grossman), Jobriath was ballsy for his time, an idol to those inching out of the closet, dismayed by the winking suggestions of the New York Dolls and Lou Reed. "The bisexual thing was hip then," says My Life With the Thrill Kill Kult singer Frank "Groovie Man" Nardiello, who snuck into a Jobriath show as a teen. "But it was slutty, not being personally involved in a relationship with a man or a woman." Still, most people were more willing to handle Bowie's dalliances than they were Jobriath's decisiveness. Wayne, who happens to be straight, recalls being warned not to play cities like Cleveland and Detroit "for fear of threat to our lives. And we were booed off the stage at the Nassau Coliseum for being faggots. They pelted things at us." Curiously, this show followed a tennis tournament featuring lesbian icon Billy Jean King.

Meanwhile, Jobriath's second album, *Creatures of the Street*, was released in '74 and greeted with…well, it wasn't greeted at all. He locked horns frequently with his manager, who began to eye his next move while Jobriath's habits devolved into full-blown alcoholism. "Once, I knocked on the door of his apartment and he crawled to the door. He couldn't even stand up. He tried to shake my hand from the floor," says Brandt, who contends that the singer also had a drug problem. (Wayne admits he'd seen his bandmate high, but points out that this being the '70s, they were all "high on cocaine.") What was certain is that the same guy who would painstakingly handmake cards for Mother's Day was clearly not his likeable self anymore.

"We were sitting in a club on the Lower East Side near a bunch of beer bottles," remembers Steven Knee, one of Jobriath's good friends. "He threw one of the bottles at a table of bikers. They threw us out." Brandt details other stories: of stealing from him, of kicking out store windows, of assaulting police officers. "He was angry. Pain always brings you to addiction," he declares. "It was like 'I want to die' pain."

As rapidly as this anomaly had been assembled, it fell apart. Elektra dropped Jobriath. And Brandt quit mid-tour amid the singer's accusations that he'd pilfered money. Jobriath-the-enterprise had crashed and burned after less than two years.

In the time that followed, Jobriath eked out a modest existence. He sometimes hustled to make ends meet, dropped by Club 82 to hang out with his drag friends and ex-*Hair* castmates, and was rumored to have auditioned for a role alongside Al Pacino in *Dog Day Afternoon*. Ultimately he changed his stage name to Cole Berlin and rekindled his love for cabaret, performing in piano bars around New York City. Requests for Jobriath songs went ignored.

Photographer John Michael Cox, who knew Jobriath at his height, reconnected with him in '79 at his Chelsea Hotel hideaway. "He seemed really happy. He had his hair cut short and no makeup at all. He struck me as a young Robert Redford." As Jobriath began to succumb to AIDS, his parents put aside their prejudices to support him (although his father mysteriously destroyed his son's diaries soon after his death). "He gave his mother a string of pearls from Bergdorf-Goodman," Fogle recalls fondly. "The card said, 'Dear Mom, every mother deserves real pearls. Merry Christmas '82. Your loving son, Bruce." Seven months later, he would be dead.

Knee was the last person to speak to Jobriath, and the weight of this isn't lost on him. Always prolific, the singer was working on a song titled "The Heart Is Like a Jazz Musician" for Frank Sinatra. "Bruce called up and said, 'How does this sound?' and sang it." It was perfect. Knee rang him up the next day to tape the track, but the phone kept ringing. He deeply regrets not recording their last conversation — if not to hold onto a piece of his friend, then to prove that he was more than just Jobriath. "Fuck rock & roll," Knee says. "He didn't need rock &

BOB GRUEN_STAR FILE

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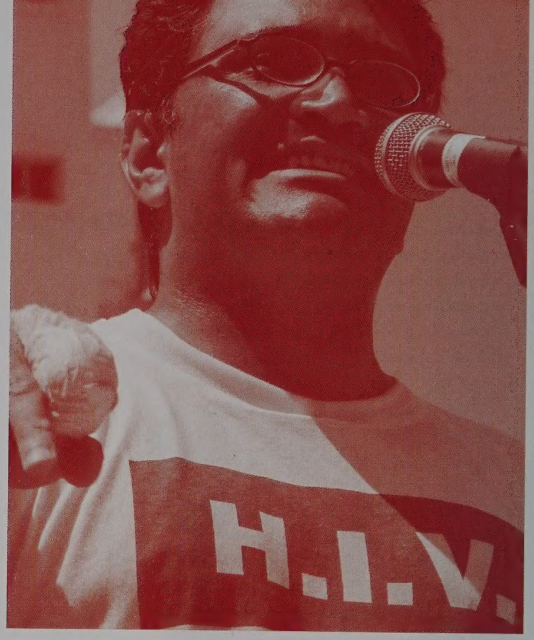



# ONE MAN'S WILL

Zackie Achmat was instrumental in getting equal rights for Gays written into the post-apartheid South African Constitution. Now, he's getting drugs into the hands of millions of South Africans infected with HIV… **Amanda Kazdoy** profiles the indomitable Gay, Muslim, "Colored" Sex Worker whose unbreakable spirit may just win him a 2004 Nobel Peace Prize….

**LAST AUGUST**, Zackie Achmat finally buckled down and started taking his HIV medication. For the better part of the 14 years he's known about his HIV status, the South African AIDS activist has refused to take his drugs out of solidarity with the infected millions in South Africa who can't afford them. "When the program of treatment is established and irreversible, then, and only then, I might go into some serious treatment of my own," he said in an interview with *Time* magazine last year.

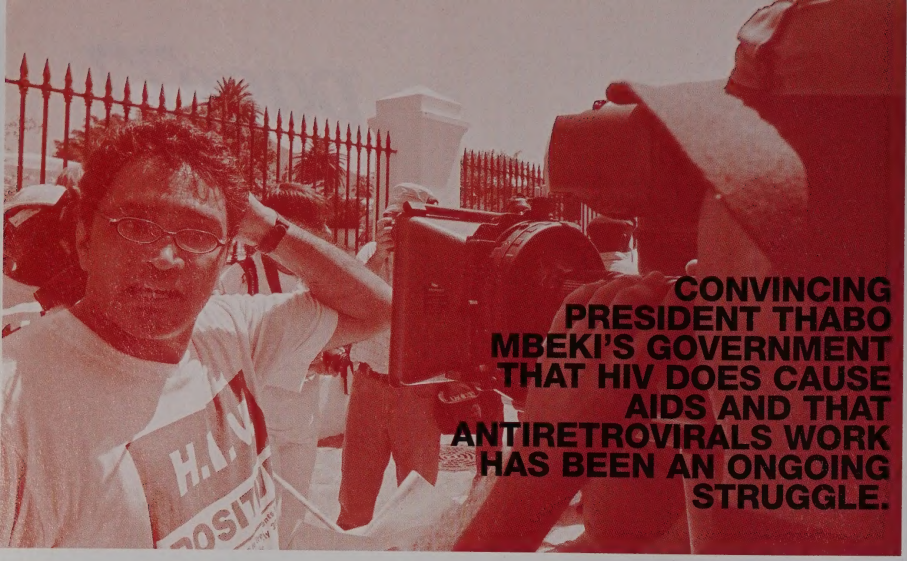
Achmat's drug strike ended prematurely because his health was failing, and because the organization he founded in 1998, the Treatment Action Campaign, needs him to continue fighting for TAC's ultimate goal: to ensure antiretrovirals get into the hands of all South Africans who need them. For the past six years, TAC has organized sit-ins, speeches, marches and rallies to achieve their original two-pronged goal — making cheaper AIDS drugs available to South Africans, and convincing the African National Congress to recognize HIV as the cause of AIDS and to distribute anitretrovirals throughout the country. South Africa currently has 5.3 million people living with HIV or AIDS, accounting for more than ten percent of the population. The group has come a long way, having achieved half of that goal. Treatment Action Campaign has moved numerous pharmaceutical companies to cut their prices and abandon their patents, and has compelled the government to provide AIDS education and drugs to many who need them, but not to all. Millions still need the medicines. So Achmat, who regularly dons his signature "HIV Positive" t-shirt, still has work to do.

## PORTRAIT OF THE ACTIVIST

Achmat was reared in a conservative Muslim household in a Cape Town township, where he was labeled "colored" because of his Asian background. Coming of age during the apartheid struggle, Achmat saw no shortage of activism, much of it in his own family. His mother and aunt were shop stewards who facilitated union protests, and Achmat quickly got involved. At 14 he helped burn down his own school during the '76 Soweto uprisings. No one was injured, but Achmat missed three months of school while doing time in jail, where he was severely beaten. And that wouldn't be the last time he looked through bars. The Trotskyite (his father was also Communist) was jailed again in 1980 at the age of 18, during which time he staged a massive hunger strike to get the most basic things for the inmates — like beds. In prison he learned the power of putting his own life on the line for a cause.

Throughout the '80s Achmat was as an underground activist for the banned ANC, the democratic movement that would eventually assume power upon the dismantling of apartheid. He was politically active during this time, but also carefree. Uneducated and unemployed, he frequently turned tricks for money. He also indulged in the lively sexual freedoms of an emerging gay population in South Africa. Many like Achmat ignored the "hype" about AIDS, which had been discovered in the U.S. "It seemed far fetched that a disease would conveniently kill fags, prostitutes, drug users and blacks. Doesn't it sound like propaganda? It was a Reaganite wet dream!" he said to the *New Yorker* last year.

Achmat was diagnosed just after Nelson Mandela was released from prison and the apartheid regime crumbled. During a time when most South Africans were rejoicing, Achmat sank into denial and depression. He was told he had six months to live, and didn't leave his apartment for about that long. He limited his activity to renting movies, ordering takeout and waiting to die.


CONVINCING PRESIDENT THABO MBEKI'S GOVERNMENT THAT HIV DOES CAUSE AIDS AND THAT ANTIRETROVIRALS WORK HAS BEEN AN ONGOING STRUGGLE.

"When I looked around after six months and noticed I was still alive, I concluded it might be time to leave the house," he has said.

He quickly got involved with the gay and lesbian cause, and later AIDS activism. In '94 he organized the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality, campaigning to incorporate gay rights into the new South African Constitution, and for the decriminalization of sodomy. Both campaigns proved successful. As for AIDS, the issue was deeply personal. At the time, the ANC — the same government he fought to put into power years earlier — was convinced that AIDS was caused by poverty and discrimination rather than HIV, and that antiretrovirals were poisonous and unnecessary. Therefore, the government was taking no pains to get cheaper, effective drugs to the millions who were dying in the country.

Treatment Action Campaign, touted as one of the most successful grassroots organizations fighting for the rights of those infected by HIV and AIDS, has launched several lobbying campaigns urging pharmaceutical companies to lower prices, and to halt their appeal for an AIDS drug patent preventing other companies from making generics of their drugs. Such outcry has forced drug companies either to comply with TAC's demands or suffer more bad press. And they have complied. By the late '90s, 39 drug companies slashed their prices and allowed generics of their drugs to be manufactured. One notable incident involved the company Glaxo, which manufactures AZT. Protesters picketed Glaxo's South African headquarters, and staged fasts and rallies in Durban, Cape Town and Soweto. As a result, Glaxo announced in March 2000 that it would halve the price of AZT in South Africa.

## SINS OF OMISSION

But fighting the drug companies was the easy part. Convincing President Thabo Mbeki's government that HIV causes AIDS and that antiretrovirals work has been an ongoing struggle. Though Mbeki and the ANC have historically been supportive of TAC's efforts — they launched safe-sex education programs in the late '90s and supported Achmat's campaign against the drug companies — Mbeki and his cabinet have not backed the mass distribution of antiretroviral drugs. Only recently has the government retreated from its position that HIV has nothing to do with AIDS.

Mbeki has repeatedly refused to discuss AIDS publicly, but his position is well documented. Case in point: The government refused to distribute Nevirapine, which halves the incidence of HIV transmission from mother to fetus, even though it was being offered for free from the drug manufacturer. The drug normally costs $50.

"The reality is that the predominate feature of illnesses that cause disease and death among the black people in our country is poverty," Mbeki has said. Achmat has described this situation as a "holocaust," whereby the government is allowing millions of its people to die of a treatable disease.

## THE FIGHT FOR DISTRIBUTION

In the midst of TAC's political endeavors, Achmat has resorted to other, more legally dubious measures to get drugs to HIV and AIDS sufferers, and to send a message to the government. In 2000, he smuggled 3,000 Biozole capsules (the generic brand of fluconazole, which treats opportunistic infections) into the country from Thailand, where they are but a fraction of the cost that South Africans pay.

According to an article in the *Bay Area Reporter,* Achmat discussed what happened with police in Bellville, near Cape Town. He and his lawyers then decided to turn the drugs over to the South African Medicines Control Council for tests to prove they are effective remedies for certain ailments. Achmat stressed that there were more capsules still in Thailand as a backup or "control" in case the drugs were tampered with. And he faced criminal charges for the smuggling. "It is a sad moment when there are medications that can save lives, but we have to break the law to get them. That is a tragedy," he said to the *Bay Area Reporter* in 2000. At the time, Achmat pledged to continue taking such action to get medicines to patients.

Treatment Action Committee hasn't gotten this far without a few health-related setbacks. Achmat frequently suffers from stomach cramps and diarrhea. In '98, he became gravely ill with oral thrush, an HIV opportunistic infection that makes it hard to swallow. It was feared he would die, and with him the fight. With the financial help of friends, he paid to treat the infection. Another time, Mandela paid him a visit and pleaded with him to start his HIV medication. He refused. Mandela has said of Achmat that he is "a role model whose activism is based on principles that are admired way beyond South Africa's borders."

Others have concurred. In recognition for his commitment to South Africa's AIDS plight, he has received a variety of awards, including the Desmond Tutu Leadership Award in October 2001, the 2003 Nelson Mandela Award for Health and Human Rights by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, and a "Newsmakers for 2003" recognition by the

National Press Club. Most recently, the American Friends Service Committee nominated Achmat for the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize. Achmat has said of the nomination, "The gains made by the TAC have been due to the efforts of thousands of people. It is the organization as a whole that must be commended for the achievements thus far."

By April '02, the ANC finally announced it would triple its AIDS prevention and treatment budget, and that rape victims and pregnant women with HIV would receive medication. The government also announced it would explore wider distribution of antiretrovirals. These actions were preceded by Mbeki's administration finally admitting that HIV causes AIDS.

On the worldwide front, Achmat spoke at the American Public Health Association's annual conference in San Francisco last November. There he addressed the Bush administration's January '03 promise to allot $15 billion to fight global AIDS over the next five years. Unfortunately, that promise has yet to be realized. "All of you here know that just like WMDs in Iraq, that $15 billion is a lie," he said at the conference, according to an article in *Harvard Public Health NOW.*

The Bush administration originally stated it would provide $3 billion in the first year, but later reduced that figure to $2 billion. After Achmat's speech, the administration changed its mind, and pledged that it would allot, with Congress' approval, $2.4 billion in the first year, according to the article.

At the time of this writing, Western Cape of South Africa receives antiretrovirals, but the rest of the country is still waiting. With the needed treatment, between 730,000 and 1.7 million lives can be saved over the next five to eight years, Achmat told CNN last year. He added that the cost of this treatment would set the government back about $1 billion per year. As of a March 9 Reuter's report, TAC is prepared to go to court before the April 14 elections in an effort to legally compel the ANC to distribute the drugs to the public sector.

"We will defend the rights of people living with HIV whether there is an election or not," Achmat is reported saying at a public meeting in Cape Town. "We are preparing a court case, and we will be in court in the next two weeks if necessary."

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# Water Cooler Confidential

With more companies than ever reaching out to GLBT employees, it looks like everyone wants a queer in the office. Just make sure the benefits they're offering don't hide a desk in the closet. **Reade Tilley** takes a sober look...

None of us was comfortable in the small Midwestern town where we attended college, but Sam had a harder time than most. His shoulder-length blond hair and thick glasses did little to help the evening dresses he was so fond of wearing hang any better from his awkward frame — and did less to protect him from being harassed on the conservative streets downtown. He had us and a small group of GLBT friends, but neither the university nor the town did much to make him or the other local queers feel at home. Thus, in addition to the difficulties we all faced — academics, relationships, lack of cash — I saw him affected by the pressures of being gay in less-than-accommodating circumstances.

A year or so after graduation, Sam was living in San Francisco, looking relaxed and happy — much different than I remembered him in college. The change, he said, was largely due to one thing: "I have the greatest job, and it's changed my life." Though Sam's company wasn't specifically GLBT-oriented, it did have a GLBT employee organization. In addition to a friendly work environment, the group provided a social network that helped Sam get settled in his new city. While many of us were sitting at desks fondly reflecting on our college days, Sam had put college out of his mind and was enjoying a much better life — because his company cared.

"You can keep your partner's picture on your desk and talk about your life," says John Klenert, a retired AT&T employee who maintains that his corporation's GLBT employee group, LEAGUE, made all the difference in creating the office environment he enjoyed. "It means less stress."

Many companies' commitment to their GLBT employees is for real — AT&T implemented a non-discrimination policy in 1975 and created LEAGUE in 1987. However, with *Queer-Eye* culture becoming mainstream, domestic partner benefits, child care, employee groups and other forms of corporate GLBT outreach can be less evidence of a progressive company and more the trappings of political correctness. The lesson? Hire beware.

## Behind the smile

In an analysis of workplace trends, Human Rights Campaign (HRC) found that 64 percent of Fortune 500 companies include sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policies, and that a third of the companies evaluated in HRC's Corporate Equality Index had improved their ratings from 2002–2003, often by adding benefits or creating a GLBT employee group. But are those efforts evidence of progress? Not necessarily, as several contributors to a PlanetOut.com forum expressed when their company received a favorable rating in the PlanetOut Partners/HRC Corporate Pride Directory:

"I work at [X] and personally I could not believe it was on the list," one man wrote. "Yes, the company provides domestic partnership. Yes, they have a non-discriminatory policy for hiring. But I would not say they have a presence for GLBT employees… It is still an 'old boys' network. Gay jokes are still commonplace and accepted. You can be gay and get hired here, but you are definitely not moving up in the ranks."

A fellow employee concurred: "I work here, and I can say that this company does not belong on the list. Basically, the Global HR people just pulled together the criteria that a company would need to be considered 'gay friendly' — domestic partner benefits, an employee network, etc… I actually had a performance review where the underlying message was 'Try to be less gay in front of the client.'"

So how can you tell if your prospective employer's GLBT-friendly image is for real? Don't accept the benefits at face value. Some of the most significant complaints lodged by the chatroom contributors above involve their company's GLBT group: i.e., the company has one, but the employees claimed it's invisible and not supported by corporate leadership.

"We publicize the existence of our [GLBT employee] groups on our Web site, and the groups participate in visible activities," says Alma Vigo-Morales, director of global diversity for Agilent, a company regularly ranked among the top GLBT-friendly places to work in the Corporate Pride Directory. "The groups have regular meetings, and in June, during Pride week, there might be an exhibit, or fliers will be handed out, or a high-level manager will speak on behalf of the [GLBT] group or an article will be published."

Agilent has two groups, chapters of GLEN (Gay and Lesbian Employee Network) and Safe Space, the latter comprised primarily of straight employees committed to creating a welcoming environment for GLBTs. While Agilent's groups may have a presence in the company, Vigo-Morales and other HR directors acknowledge that outreach is tricky because GLBT members don't always want to be visible.

"The company doesn't do much [in terms of outreach]," says Karen Parker, a software engineer and vice president of EQUAL!, a GLBT employee group at Lucent Technologies. "We deliberately don't count our membership. We exist through mail lists, mailing groups, things like that. Many of our members are closeted or semi-closeted, except those of us who are in leadership positions; we're out. A lot of people are still concerned about being out at work. The company is very good, but that doesn't mean people's co-workers are going to be as accepting. Some people are afraid."

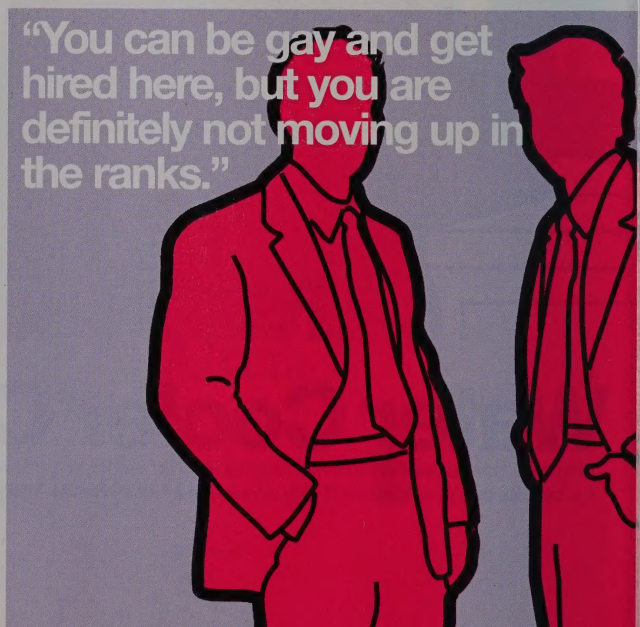
## Education

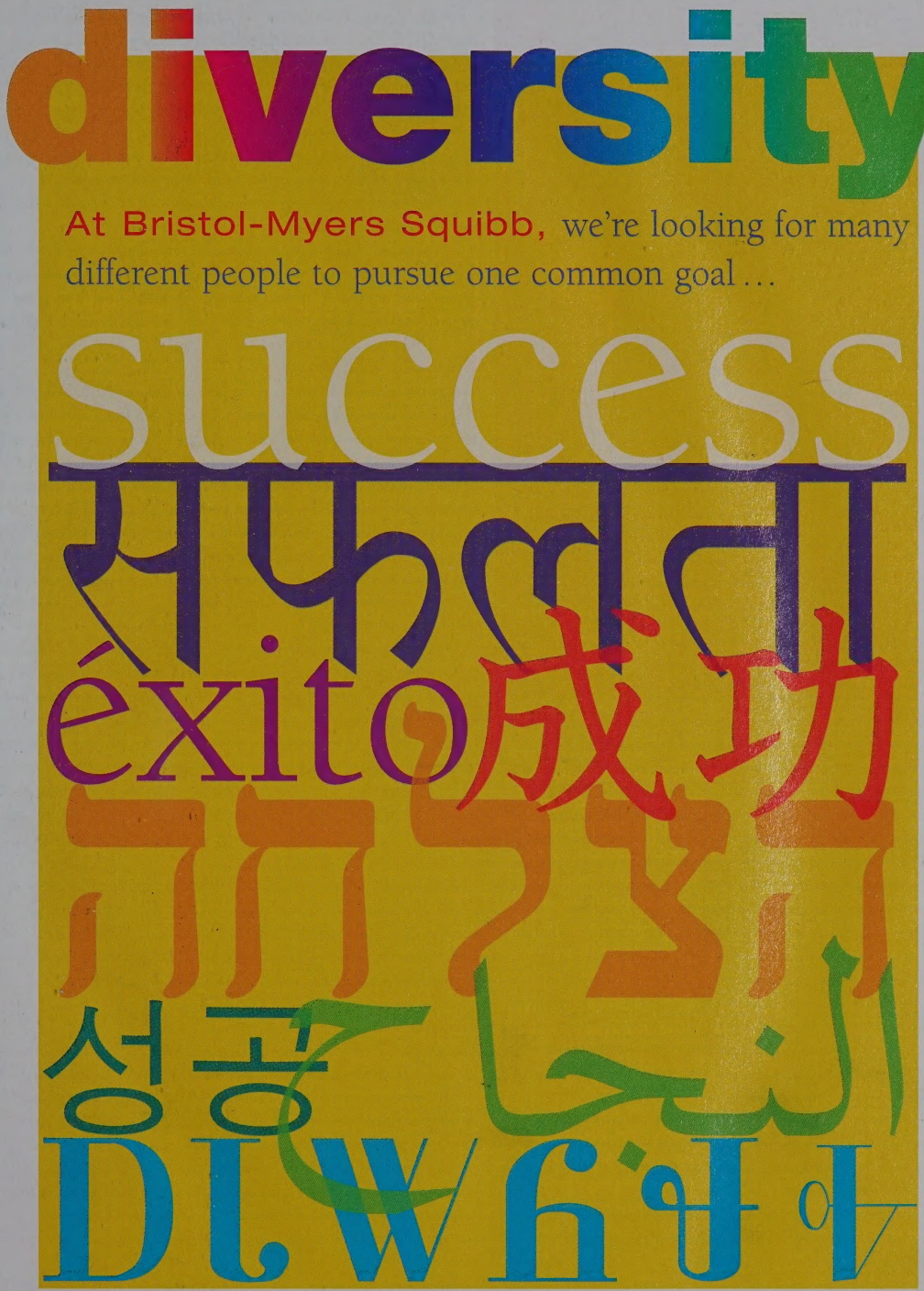
Lucent's group is an offshoot of AT&T's LEAGUE, and was formed when AT&T split in 1996. Though it sounds almost clandestine, EQUAL! is a tremendously effective group, and Parker, who's spent 24 years at Lucent, says the company has long been committed to creating a GLBT-friendly work environment, with GLBTs in top positions and corporate leaders constantly demonstrating support.

That top-level support is critical to validating a GLBT employee group's existence, says Klenert, the former national president of LEAGUE and current president of the Washington, DC chapter.

"We had the corporation's chairman come to our conference," he says, "and it doesn't take someone with half a brain to realize that if the chief guy is going to come to a meeting and show support for a group, you better get on board or keep your mouth shut."

In an effort to help the uninformed get on board, companies like Bristol Myers Squibb have implemented diversity training programs.



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## THE TOP 21

With employee groups, benefits and other resources for GLBTs, these companies are (hopefully) the future of human resources. All of them received a score of 100 percent from the Human Rights Campaign for 2003:

**Aetna Inc.**
**American Airlines (AMR Corp.)**
**Apple Computer Inc.**
**Avaya Inc.**
**Bank One Corp.**
**Capital One Financial Corp.**
**Eastman Kodak Co.**
**Hewlett-Packard Co.**
**IBM Corp.**
**Intel Corp.**
**J.P. Morgan Chase & Co.**
**Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc.**
**Levi Strauss & Co.**
**Lucent Technologies Inc.**
**MetLife Inc.**
**NCR Corp.**
**Nike Inc.**
**PG&E Corp.**
**Prudential Financial Inc.**
**S.C. Johnson & Son Inc.**
**Xerox Corp.**

This excerpt is from a Human Rights Campaign report that rates 250 companies from two respected lists: the Fortune 500 and Forbes 200 largest private companies. See HRC's Web site for more information on businesses: www.hrc.org

Before 2000, BMS didn't even offer domestic partner benefits. Now, the company is a leader in organizing workplace diversity on a large scale. To celebrate Pride last June, BMS launched a GLBT employee group, and the company currently offers "every benefit allowed by law" to its GLBT employees, says Stacey Gibson, BMS senior director of work, life and diversity programs. They've hosted "lunch-and-learns" to educate employees about GLBT issues, worked with their group to form appropriate language for company communications, brought in a Merrill Lynch advisor to discuss domestic partners' financial and estate planning and reached out to community groups, like PFLAG. More importantly, the company is not just offering — it's demanding — diversity training for all employees, a large part of which involves understanding differences in sexual orientation.

"We're very proud of that," says Gibson. "It's a mandatory program for all employees in the U.S. and Puerto Rico."

The online training involves videos, scenario exploration, corporate expectations of office behavior, laws regarding discrimination and more. All employees have 30 days to comply with the training order, after which they're tested on their knowledge and certified, if they test well. The training is online because BMS is a tech-happy company, and because it's big. "We began the program in January, and we should have about 20,000 employees through training by June," Gibson says.

Internationally, things are a bit different. BMS's outlook regarding workplace diversity "is a global philosophy, and the expectation of behavior is the same" at offices around the world, says Gibson, "but how it plays out is different."

Gibson says that cultural differences affect numerous aspects of human resources, including employee incentives, training, and the general atmosphere of the work environment, making U.S. approaches to some workplace issues either inappropriate or irrelevant abroad.

Vigo-Morales finds similar differences, explaining that while Agilent is present in 32 countries, GLBT-specific diversity training programs are currently not implemented in Agilent's non-U.S. offices. "You know that different cultures understand sexual orientation issues differently, and that cultural understanding is what we as individuals bring to the workplace… To be honest, I am not aware that there is a strong need for [GLBT-specific diversity training outside the United States]; I'm sure it would be helpful, but I am not aware of any obvious need." If such training was to be implemented, it would be up to the company's GLBT groups, which handle the U.S. training programs.

In any case, Agilent, like many other companies, is standing by its non-discrimination statement (to which it recently added gender identity and expression), promising "drastic measures, including loss of employment" for employees who refuse to embrace diversity and abstain from discrimination.

## It's only human

Things are better. The number of companies that scored 100 percent on the HRC Corporate Quality Index went up 91 percent from 2002–2003, and of the 250 companies rated, the median score in that period jumped from 57 to 71, signifying that "employers are generally meeting one additional criterion of the index compared to 2002," according to HRC. So with employers becoming more GLBT-friendly and laws slowly changing in favor of GLBT employees, is there an end in sight for organizations like EQUAL!, GLEN and LEAGUE? No, according to Vigo-Morales and others, who point out that while GLBTs share some workplace issues with other minorities, they have not progressed as far as African Americans or women, for example, into real social acceptance.

"Agilent's place of birth is the U.S., and in this country we have traveled in our diversity journey long enough to know that racism or gender conflict is not acceptable," says Vigo-Morales. "There is probably no one in the workplace who would say racism or gender bias is ok — even if it happens without realizing it, we know it's not ok. But when it comes to gender identity or sexual orientation, we're not quite there as a country. We've just begun to learn about sexual orientation or gender identity issues. It's been more challenging to inform, educate and convince our employees that it is critical that the GLBT community enjoy the kind of environment that everyone enjoys at Agilent."

That hasn't stopped some GLBTs from getting comfortable, says AT&T's Klenert. "Some folks don't feel they need to join an organization because they think everything is hunky-dory. Do I think that's accurate? No. I believe an organization has to maintain a semblance of a visual identity. It's too easy for people to revert to bad habits; It's only human."

## Rewards

The rewards of creating a safe and accepting work environment for GLBTs are many, for both GLBT employees and the companies that employ them.

"If you have employees who feel like they can be themselves, feel like they have opportunity to advance and to be promoted without hiding who they are, you're going to have a successful company," says Parker.

"Diversity is what drives creativity and creativity is what drives innovation and success for our company," says Vigo-Morales. "I believe, and Agilent believes, the happier I feel at work, the more productive I will be; the more included I feel, the more valued I feel, the better my contribution at work."

Increased production, increased enthusiasm, more creativity and happy employees all translates into more money. But the biggest benefit to employers may be impossible to value — loyalty, evidenced in Klenert's words as he got off the phone: "One more thing: We thank everybody for using AT&T."

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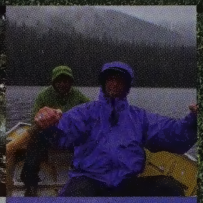
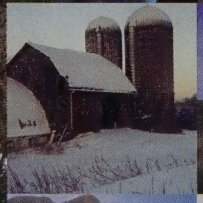
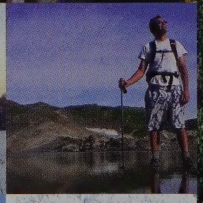
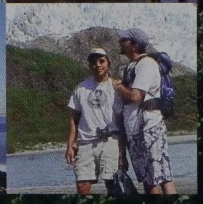
# Getting Out of the Ghetto

**Buffetted by the high cost of living and a low quality of life, more gays are abandoning the megalopolis for small cities and even smaller towns. But what do they find when they trade Hipsville for Hooterville? Mark Davis reports...**





THE DECLARATION "I'M GAY" USED TO be immediately followed by "I'm moving to the city." But times have changed. In the midst of our fight for basic civil rights, like gay marriage, another primary issue is picking up momentum for the LGBT community: the freedom to live wherever we choose.

If you never go out to bars, and prefer a small group of choice friends over a large circle of acquaintances; if you're sick of smog and traffic, and tired of the social complications of city living; and if you're around 40, then you match the profile of the pioneers of this movement towards resettling the gay community back into the middle states of America.

The number one reason LGBT types are fleeing the cities? Money. Interest rates are still close to an all-time low, and mortgage accessibility is at an all-time high. According to mortgage broker Tony Magtoto of Direct Mortgage, Inc., "the current Federal Housing association cap on home loans is $250K." $250K might buy you a small condo in West Hollywood. And in San Francisco or New York City? Forget it.

Walter, 47, just bought a farm in LaWonda, Pennsylvania on which to retire. The monthly mortgage on his LA duplex is $2200 a month. The mortgage on his 290-acre farm? $1200. A personal trainer for 19 years and a gym owner in LA for seven, he is looking forward to working the farm and eventually converting the house into a B&B. Regarding LA, Walter observes "it's too fast and keeps going faster. People don't have time stop and enjoy simple things."

Walter won't actually get to move to his paradise for about a year. What can he expect once he gets there?

### *Chico via the Bay*

Elizabeth and Amy, both in their 40s, are a lesbian couple with two daughters. They sold a 1200-square-foot home in SF for $372K, and bought a 2000-square-foot home in Chico, California, with a multi-acre backyard and swimming pool. Their daughters refer to the backyard as "the park."

With the equity from the sale of their SF home Elizabeth has become a stay-at-home mom, while Amy runs her own business using the skills she acquired working for other people in the city. They made the choice to move when their daughter had been spending so much time with the Irish nanny that she developed a brogue.

Chico, California has a population of roughly 100,00, about 24,000 of which are college students at the university. Summers and holidays are quiet. According to Amy, the college kids "couldn't care less" about gay people either way.

The public school where Elizabeth and Amy send their daughters is a "very liberal, open-structure system." The preschool teacher to whom these women entrusted their daughter said out loud, "We love diversity here."

As far as social life, they have dinner two nights a week with friends, because now "we have the time." There are a myriad of LGBT social groups in Chico, including lesbian mommies and "men with children," as

well as sporting groups and social gatherings for singles. Amy told me that after dinner at one of these events you have an instant group of social contacts. There's no gay bar, but a couple of the local pubs have gay-friendly nights. In addition, they are two hours and 45 minutes by car to SF. They fly out of either Chico or Sacramento when they want to travel, but Amy tells me, "we never miss the city."

### *Northern exposure*

Jeremy Neldon moved to Alaska to pursue his love of the outdoors, and also to "find himself" and come out. His partner Chris laughs, "In Juneau?!" Actually, he observes, "a lot of people who live here seem to be escaping or trying to find themselves… If people make it through the first three years they tend to stay."

Juneau was the last place on Chris Beane's mind the night he stopped by the Silverado bar in his home city of Portland, Oregon. He wanted to move to Vancouver, NYC, or SF at the time. Enter Jeremy, on a husband-scouting trip to the big city. Says Chris, "We instantly fell for each other. And I visited Juneau to see if it might be a possibility." Six months later they were in Juneau together. They lived in a cabin, then on a boat, and then settled into their $800 a month, one-bedroom apartment. Unlike many places profiled here, Juneau isn't cheap. But for those of us in the big three — NYC, SF or LA — $800 a month is still reasonable.

"Living in Juneau forces you to become sort of lesbian," Chris jokes. "The first month here I made bread. I'd never made bread in my life." Chris and Jeremy go out on charters with day licenses to stock up on fish for the year. They "put up" jam with rare Alaskan Nagoon berries that they painstakingly pick themselves, and like so many people in Alaska they wear more than one hat. Chis had to wait nearly two years to get a job in his field as a city planner, but according to him it was worth the wait. He is also the DJ for most of the large gay dances. Jeremy dj's as well, in addition to his job as a special education teacher working with gifted children. Both have appeared in a community theater production of Studs Terkel's *Working*.

Chris also paints and has an art studio downtown. During monthly gallery walks, the tourists and locals get a glimpse of his wild abstract art amongst the usual Alaskan landscapes and Orcas. Chris and Jeremy organized the first Pride events Juneau has ever seen (four years and counting), and have held public events that the "queer community reluctantly embraced. We had some friction. We were on the SEAGLA board (local gay/les organization); Jeremy was the president but we got a little tired 'cause we were the only ones doing all the work...but for a good three to four years we were constantly putting on events...we now have an 'outer' community than before — no more secret handshakes."

### *Queer eye for the trailer park*

Brian's health fares poorly in LA. The combo of HIV, allergies, smog, and tension makes him sick in the city. In Houston, with cleaner air and less stress, he fares much better. His partner tells me, "LA literally makes him sick."

Men with HIV living on disability tend to stick close to the inner city health services necessary to maintain their health. But is this the only option?

Over on the East Coast, Steve discovered that the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond offered all the services he needs. Richmond is 135 miles from his hometown of Danville, where his aging parents live. He felt he would rather be "involved in their drama instead of my own, worrying about whether or not some queen returned my instant message on AOL."

He bought a $45K one-bedroom home for which he pays a $340 monthly mortgage. He works two nights bartending at a local gay club, and travels 75 miles to Washington, DC whenever he wants. There or only five or six gay bars in Richmond, but he doesn't care. He spends his time doing watercolors with his brother and his kids.

Steve is in love with his huge backyard, and last year he installed a 1971 Shasta trailer that he bought for $100. He and his Dad gutted, leveled, and decked out the trailer in turquoise and pink, with pink flamingos in the yard and a neon martini sign.

It is his outdoor bar and rec room. "So I fit in with the trailer trash, but in my own special way."

### *What's so funny about Cleveland?*

In 1991 Karen Williams left a $1650 a month, three-bedroom and two-bath house in Corte Madera, California. She moved to Euclid, Ohio, a Cleveland suburb, into a 3,000-square-foot penthouse on Lake Erie for $825 a month. Four years ago, she bought a five-bedroom, two-bath home for $130,000.

Karen is a proud, beautiful, outspoken lesbian comedian and single mother of three who has managed, in her words, "to do a better job of taking care of myself, my children, and my extended family" by relocating from SF to a suburb of Cleveland. For Karen, "it was such a financial strain to keep it all together in the Bay. I always worked two jobs. The LGBT culture was very captivating, but at all times I was still a single mom, and I had to make it on my own."

Her popularity as a comedian found her at a gig in Cleveland in 1991 where a manager persuaded her to move — partly by securing her more lucrative comedy gigs in the Northeast, Southeast, and Midwest.

"When I moved to this area, my son Yusef was away at college…of course he needed financial assistance." Her son Ben reunited with the family in Ohio in 1995. However, her youngest son Keith was living with her during the move and had to adjust to Euclid schools. "It was challenging for him because having a lesbian mom in Cleveland isn't the same as it was for my middle son, who went to Berkeley High with children of gay parents and test-tube kids in his class."

Like a number of the people profiled here, Karen brought the best part of big city gay culture with her. "When I first performed at Cleveland Pride in 1991 there were about 500 people there. Last year we had about 6,000. Ethnically, though, "Cleveland is still on record as the second most segregated city in the country…I'm part of the solution by living here, not part of the problem."

The kids have since left the nest. Karen has earned two degrees in five years from Cleveland State University, where she taught the only four-credit, university-level, stand-up comedy class in the country. She runs her own business, The International Institute of Humor and Healing Arts (www.hahainstitute.com) and uses nearby Cleveland Airport to travel nationwide, performing, doing workshops, and visiting her screenwriter girlfriend in LA.

### *Laramie*

Bob Hooker was living in a Baltimore housing project — the "inner city gay ghetto" — when he got caught in the middle of a crack war between rival gangs in the building foyer. "When the shooting started I knew it was time to leave."

Having lived in Hoboken, New Jersey and commuted to the West Village of NYC for work, Bob was more than ready to move back to his birthplace: Laramie, Wyoming, where he came out and had his first gay experience.

He moved back May of '98; that October Matthew Shephard was murdered. Bob couldn't help but compare it to the murder of Marcia P. Johnson, the drag queen that led the NYC Pride parade in '93. Marcia was beaten to death and thrown into the Hudson River. While Johnson's case is still unsolved, the suspects in Shephard's case, McKinney and Henderson, were picked up by the Laramie Police force in 24 hours, and were speedily tried and convicted.

Laramie Police Chief Dave O'Malley, the man responsible for this swift police work, now serves on the executive board of of the Wyoming AIDS walk, and has been awarded the

Commitment to Diversity award from the Human Rights Campaign Fund. This kind of commitment is a far cry from too many inner city police chiefs.

For Bob, Laramie "is where I grew up. It's home. Being older, I enjoy the pace of life here. Laramie is the most liberal community in Wyoming by virtue of the university being here." The gay community in Laramie has been mobilized and activated since Shephard's murder. The University of Wyoming LGBT campus organization is now an active, visible element of the Laramie community.

Dynamic as the young people on campus are, however, Bob enjoys an "older gay crowd of my peerage that has dinner parties" and socializing with "gay-friendly straight folks." Bob and I chatted about our mutual love of Laramie, where I first met him in 1985. As a slight, very young gay boy, I and the other members of the University's summer theater company took over the local bars of Laramie on a nightly basis, camping it up and laughing, not just without incident but with the interest and support of a number of locals.

Of the four male company members three of us were gay, and even in 1985 nobody seemed to care. We reminisced about the almost painful beauty of Laramie in the summer, with nightly lightning storms that look more like something out of *Close Encounters* than anything that seems possible in nature.

Speaking of lightning: it tends not to strike twice. Hooker and I both agree that the community of Laramie is a beautiful and realistic place for gay people to live, and for Bob, "It's home."

### *Terra firma, terra incognita*

According to the National Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Centers there are 200 LGBT community centers around the country, including centers in Moscow, Idaho, and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In the last ten years, I have traveled extensively across the United States and experienced, first hand, many active and thriving gay communities, in places like Tucson, Arizona; Santa Fe, New Mexico; Charlotte, North Carolina; St. Petersburg, Florida; Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, Indiana; St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri; Louisville, Kentucky; Atlanta, Georgia; and even Bangor, Maine. In each instance I was met with warm, welcoming, organized LGBT communities that were diverse and rich with local culture — and I might add, always interested in what a new member might bring to the mix.

Perhaps no one has fled the city as decisively as Simone Troy, the transgendered woman and Sydney drag favorite who many agree was the basis for the Terence Stamp character in the film *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert.*

Decked out in sequins, she regaled me over dinner some years ago with tales of moving to the outback of Australia after becoming tired of city life in Sydney. There were power outages and hardships aplenty in the outback, but of her neighbors, she says, "I don't' know if they knew who or WHAT I was, but they were the NICEST people."

Realistically, though, I'm afraid not everyone meets the nicest people.

Brian and Jeff moved to Enosburgh Falls, Vermont, at the foot of the Green Mountains. "Banjo-type area..." Brian described it.

To start with, they ran into a first-time homebuyers' nightmare. The house was not in the condition that they had been led to believe, and the land plot turned out to be wrong. When it was corrected by city hall, they realized they had half the property they originally thought, and then "very loud noisy rednecks" filled in the space next door.

There was no local police force to help with the nuisance neighbors; only state troopers had jurisdiction there, and they were ineffectual. The nasty neighbors wrote "faggot" on the front door of their home. They were regularly shouted at as they walked to the grocery store. In the end, they said, California is they place they ought to be, so they loaded up the truck and moved next door to Beverly, West Hollywood.

Michelle left NYC to move to her family home in Lexington, Kentucky. The Civil War–era home had been broken into apartments, and her family provided her with a very sweet rent. However, work was difficult to come by. After temping for a year and a half, she finally found full-time work in her field. "You're lucky to make ten bucks an hour here in administrative positions that I was making $22 for in NYC." Her other complaint: "I came for a quiet life, but life has been much more dramatic in a small town. Everybody's in everybody's face. The only thing I had to worry about in NYC was getting mugged on the subway."

After speaking with all of these people, I had to ask myself the question, "What if I moved home?" I looked up the only gay guy I knew of in my own small hometown, the twin cities of Centralia and Chehalis, Washington.

In a slightly bizarre twist of fate, he is currently working at the funeral home my family owned and operated for a hundred years, then sold to a corporation in 1995. Our old house and the mortuary stand together on a five-acre plot. So I knew that while I spoke to him he was standing roughly a hundred yards from my childhood bedroom.

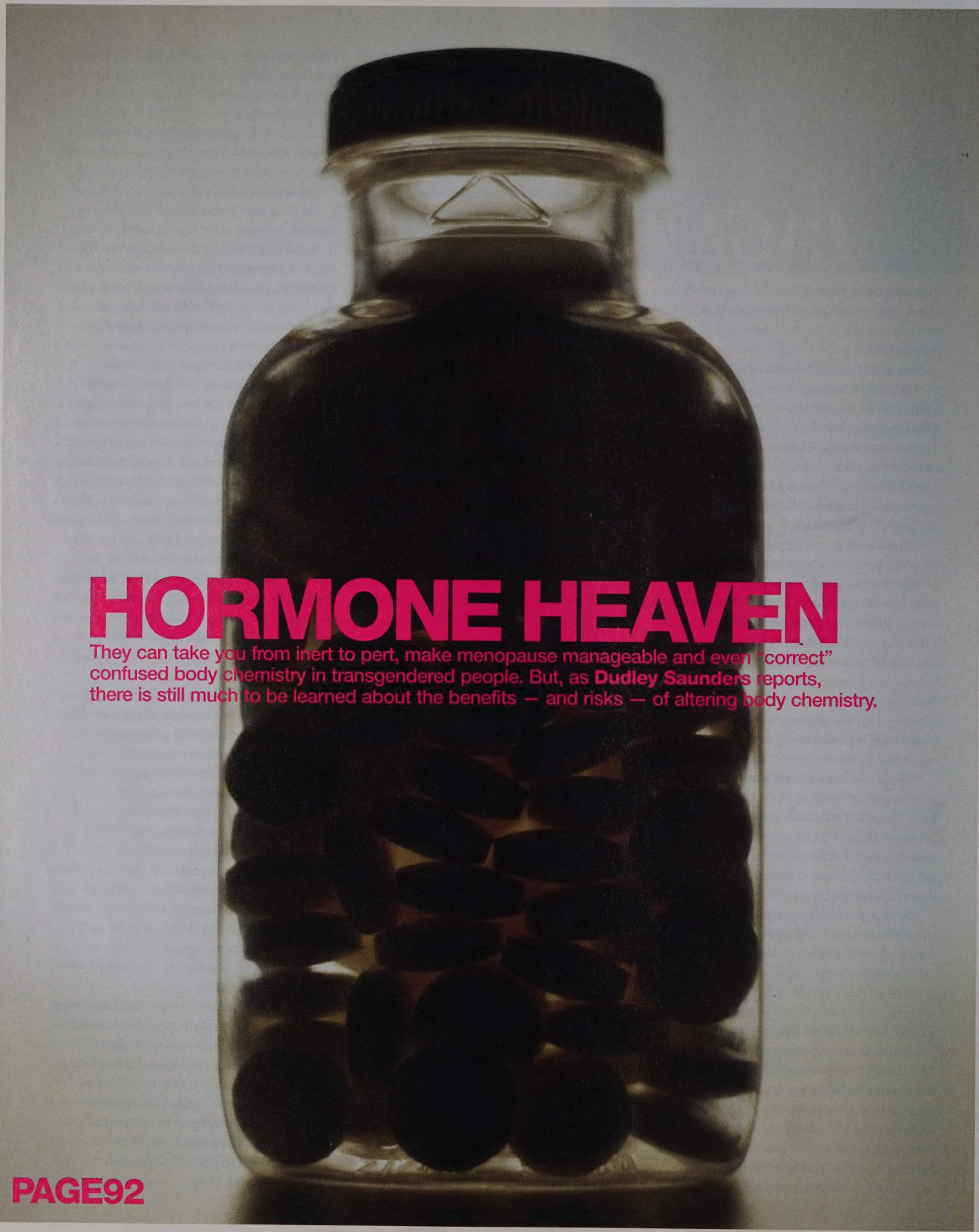
"It's a lot different than when we were young." Daniel told me. The Lewis County Health Department that once provided me with a chain-smoking counselor who tried to cure me of my homosexuality now sponsors a youth group for young gays to meet in a supportive, nurturing environment. Daniel tells me that for them, life in a small town is quite different these days. "Due in part to the fashion of being queer…you can find yourself being the pet gay in a group, and finding yourself at an advantage for that fact alone, even in a small town like this." But there are also "stories of abuse that [make] you hurt all over again" — and conversely triumphs, like the story of a boy going to the prom with his boyfriend, with the full support of the Chehalis High School principal.

This is all a big change for Daniel, who used to joke that "if people weren't pelting me with rocks and garbage and yelling faggot every ten minutes I wouldn't know how to act."

The only time Daniel left Lewis County for an extended period was when he attended Mortuary Science College in San Francisco. It was "the most riotous fantastic year of my life" he remembers. Driving home, past the freeway billboard with a giant picture of Uncle Sam that in the past has runs epithets like, "AIDS, the miracle disease that turns fruits into vegetables," he broke into tears. "What have I come back for?" But he knew the answer.

"In your 20s, you find out who really loves you. It's your family."

In speaking to this extremely articulate man, I realized that by simply sticking it out, treating others with respect, and waiting for the town to gather round him, he had invented a new kind of homosexual that could only have evolved in places like Centralia. Perhaps Daniel and the other people profiled here provide templates for all of us, as we find our way out of the Ghetto-Mecca and back to where we belong — the whole of America.



# HORMONE HEAVEN

They can take you from inert to pert, make menopause manageable and even "correct" confused body chemistry in transgendered people. But, as **Dudley Saunders** reports, there is still much to be learned about the benefits — and risks — of altering body chemistry.

he word on HIV:
Ask your doctor how REYATAZ, in HIV combination therapy, can help you
fight HIV your way.
Individual results may vary.

**INDICATION:** REYATAZ™ (atazanavir sulfate) is a prescription medication used in combination with other medicines to treat people who are infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Reyataz has been studied in 48-week trials in patients who have never taken anti-HIV medicines and in 24-week trials in patients who have taken anti-HIV medicines before.

**Reyataz does not cure HIV or prevent passing HIV to others.**

**IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:**

**Do not take Reyataz if you are taking the following medicines:** ergot medicines, Versed®, Halcion®, Orap®, Propulsid®, Camptosar®, Vascor®, Crixivan®, Mevacor®, Zocor®, rifampin, St. John's wort, AcipHex®, Nexium®, Prevacid®, Prilosec® or Protonix®. Do not use Viagra® while you are taking Reyataz without first speaking with your healthcare provider. **This list of medicines is not complete. Discuss all prescription, non-prescription and herbal products you are taking or plan to take with your healthcare provider.**

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any side effects or conditions, including the following:

- **A change in the way your heart beats** may occur and could be symptoms of a heart problem.
- **Diabetes and high blood sugar** may occur in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like Reyataz.
- **If you have liver disease,** including hepatitis B or C, your liver disease may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like Reyataz.
- **Yellowing of the skin and/or eyes** may occur due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver).
- **Some patients with hemophilia** have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitor medicines like Reyataz.
- **A severe buildup of lactic acid in the blood (lactic acidosis syndrome),** which can cause death, has been reported in patients taking Reyataz with other anti-HIV medicines called nucleoside analogs.
- **Changes in body fat** have been seen in some patients taking anti-HIV medicines. The cause and long-term effects are not known at this time.
- **Other common side effects** of Reyataz taken with other anti-HIV medicines include: nausea, headache, rash, stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, numbness, tingling or burning in hands or feet, and depression.

**Please see important information about REYATAZ on the next page.**

**Once Daily REYATAZ** is a protease inhibitor (PI) that is taken in HIV combination therapy.

- **Can help raise your T-cells**
- **Can help lower your viral load to undetectable***
- **Low chance of diarrhea** (shown in clinical trials)†
- **Two pills taken once-a-day** (with a snack or meal)

*Undetectable is defined as a viral load of less than 400 or 50 copies/mL.
† REYATAZ in combination therapy had a 6-8% rate of moderate-to-severe diarrhea.

You and your doctor can **fight HIV your way.**

REYATAZ™
(atazanavir sulfate) 200 mg capsules

BMS Virology™
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company

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# PATIENT INFORMATION

# *REYATAZ* ™ (RAY-ah-taz)

## (generic name = **atazanavir sulfate**) **Capsules**

**ALERT: Find out about medicines that should NOT be taken with REYATAZ (atazanavir sulfate).** Read the section "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?"

Read the Patient Information that comes with REYATAZ before you start using it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This leaflet provides a summary about REYATAZ and does not include everything there is to know about your medicine. This information does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

**What is REYATAZ?**
REYATAZ is a prescription medicine used with other anti-HIV medicines to treat people who are infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). HIV is the virus that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). REYATAZ is a type of anti-HIV medicine called a protease inhibitor. HIV infection destroys CD4 (T) cells, which are important to the immune system. The immune system helps fight infection. After a large number of T cells are destroyed, AIDS develops. REYATAZ helps to block HIV protease, an enzyme that is needed for the HIV virus to multiply. REYATAZ may lower the amount of HIV in your blood, help your body keep its supply of CD4 (T) cells, and reduce the risk of death and illness associated with HIV.

**Does REYATAZ cure HIV or AIDS?**
**REYATAZ does not cure HIV infection or AIDS.** At present there is no cure for HIV infection. People taking REYATAZ may still get opportunistic infections or other conditions that happen with HIV infection. Opportunistic infections are infections that develop because the immune system is weak. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, and *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections. **It is very important that you see your healthcare provider regularly while taking REYATAZ.**

**REYATAZ does not lower your chance of passing HIV to other people through sexual contact, sharing needles, or being exposed to your blood.** For your health and the health of others, it is important to always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom or other barrier to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood. Never use or share dirty needles.

**Who should not take REYATAZ?**
**Do not take REYATAZ if you:**
- **are taking certain medicines**. (See "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?") Serious life-threatening side effects or death may happen. Before you take REYATAZ, tell your healthcare provider about all medicines you are taking or planning to take. These include other prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.
- **are allergic to REYATAZ or to any of its ingredients.** The active ingredient is atazanavir sulfate. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients in REYATAZ. Tell your healthcare provider if you think you have had an allergic reaction to any of these ingredients.

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before I take REYATAZ?**
**Tell your healthcare provider:**
- **If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant**. It is not known if REYATAZ can harm your unborn baby. Pregnant women have experienced serious side effects when taking REYATAZ with other HIV medicines called nucleoside analogues. You and your healthcare provider will need to decide if REYATAZ is right for you. If you use REYATAZ while you are pregnant, talk to your healthcare provider about the Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry.
- **If you are breast-feeding**. You should not breast-feed if you are HIV-positive because of the chance of passing HIV to your baby. Also, it is not known if REYATAZ can pass into your breast milk and if it can harm your baby. If you are a woman who has or will have a baby, talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.
- **If you have liver problems or are infected with the hepatitis B or C virus**. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- **If you have diabetes**. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- **If you have hemophilia**. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- **About all the medicines you take** including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Keep a list of your medicines with you to show your healthcare provider. For more information, see "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?" and "Who should not take REYATAZ?" Some medicines can cause serious side effects if you also take REYATAZ.

**How should I take REYATAZ?**
- **Take REYATAZ once every day exactly as instructed by your healthcare provider**. Your healthcare provider will prescribe the amount of REYATAZ that is right for you. Your dose will depend on your liver function and on the other anti-HIV medicines that you are taking. REYATAZ is always used with other anti-HIV medicines. If you are taking REYATAZ and Sustiva® (efavirenz), you should also be taking Norvir® (ritonavir).
- **Always take REYATAZ (atazanavir sulfate) with food** (a meal or snack) to help it work better. Swallow the capsules whole. **Do not open the capsules**. Try to take REYATAZ at the same time each day.
- **If you are taking antacids or Videx® (didanosine) Chewable/Dispersible Buffered Tablets**, take REYATAZ 2 hours before or 1 hour after these medicines.
- **Do not change your dose or stop taking REYATAZ without first talking with your healthcare provider**. It is important to stay under a healthcare provider's care while taking REYATAZ.
- **When your supply of REYATAZ starts to run low**, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. It is important not to run out of REYATAZ. The amount of HIV in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time.
- **If you miss a dose of REYATAZ**, take it as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose at its regular time. If, however, it is within 6 hours of your next dose, do not take the missed dose. Wait and take the next dose at the regular time. Do not double the next dose. **It is important that you do not miss any doses of REYATAZ or your other anti-HIV medicines**.
- **If you take more than the prescribed dose of REYATAZ**, call your healthcare provider or poison control center right away.

**Can children take REYATAZ?**
REYATAZ has not been fully studied in children under 16 years of age. REYATAZ is not recommended for use in babies under the age of 3 months.

**What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?**
The following list of side effects is **not** complete. Report any new or continuing symptoms to your healthcare provider. If you have questions about side effects, ask your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider may be able to help you manage these side effects.

**REYATAZ can cause the following side effects:**
- **yellowing of the skin or eyes**. These effects may be due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver). Call your healthcare provider if your skin or the white part of your eyes turn yellow. Although these effects may not be damaging to your liver, skin, or eyes, it is important to tell your healthcare provider promptly if they occur.
- **a change in the way your heart beats (heart rhythm change)**. Call your healthcare provider right away if you get dizzy or lightheaded. These could be symptoms of a heart problem.
- **diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia)** sometimes happen in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like REYATAZ. Some patients had diabetes before taking protease inhibitors while others did not. Some patients may need changes in their diabetes medicine.
- **if you have liver disease** including hepatitis B or C, your liver disease may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like REYATAZ.
- **some patients with hemophilia** have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitors like REYATAZ.
- **a serious condition called lactic acidosis syndrome** (a severe buildup of an acid in the blood that sometimes causes death). Some people who have taken REYATAZ with anti-HIV medicines called nucleoside analogues have developed lactic acidosis syndrome. Lactic acidosis syndrome has happened more in people who are female or obese (very overweight). Lactic acidosis syndrome is a medical emergency and must be treated in the hospital. **Call your healthcare provider right away and do not continue to take REYATAZ and your other anti-HIV medicines unless instructed to by your healthcare provider if you get any of the following signs of lactic acidosis syndrome:**
  - You have persistent nausea, vomiting, or unusual or unexpected stomach discomfort,
  - You feel very weak and tired,
  - You have trouble breathing,
  - You have weakness, especially in your arms and legs.
- **changes in body fat**. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

Other common side effects of REYATAZ taken with other anti-HIV medicines include nausea; headache; rash; stomach pain; vomiting; diarrhea; depression; fever; increased cough; dizziness; trouble sleeping; pain; tiredness; back pain; numbness, tingling, or burning of hands or feet; and joint pain.

**What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines*?**
**Do not take REYATAZ if you take the following medicines (not all brands may be listed; tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take). REYATAZ may cause serious, life-threatening side effects or death when used with these medicines.**
- Ergot medicines: dihydroergotamine, ergonovine, ergotamine, and methylergonovine such as Cafergot®, Migranal®, D.H.E. 45®, ergotrate maleate, Methergine®, and others (used for migraine headaches).
- Halcion® (triazolam, used for insomnia).
- Versed® (midazolam, used for sedation).
- Orap® (pimozide, used for Tourette's disorder).
- Propulsid® (cisapride, used for certain stomach problems).

**Do not take the following medicines with REYATAZ because of possible serious side effects:**
- Camptosar® (irinotecan, used for cancer).
- Vascor® (bepridil, used for high blood pressure).
- Crixivan® (indinavir, used for HIV infection). Both REYATAZ and Crixivan sometimes cause increased levels of bilirubin in the blood.
- Cholesterol-lowering medicines Mevacor® (lovastatin) or Zocor® (simvastatin).

**Do not take the following medicines with REYATAZ (atazanavir sulfate) because they may lower the amount of REYATAZ in your blood**. This may lead to an increased HIV viral load. Resistance to REYATAZ or cross-resistance to other HIV medicines may develop:
- Rifampin (also known as Rimactane®, Rifadin®, Rifater®, or Rifamate®, used for tuberculosis).
- St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), an herbal product sold as a dietary supplement, or products containing St. John's wort.
- "Proton-pump inhibitors" used for indigestion, heartburn, or ulcers such as AcipHex® (rabeprazole), Nexium® (esomeprazole), Prevacid® (lansoprazole), Prilosec® (omeprazole), or Protonix® (pantoprazole).

**The following medicines may require your healthcare provider to monitor your therapy more closely:**
- Viagra® (sildenafil). REYATAZ may increase the chances of serious side effects that can happen with Viagra. Do not use Viagra while you are taking REYATAZ (atazanavir sulfate), unless your healthcare provider tells you it is okay.
- Lipitor® (atorvastatin). There is an increased chance of serious side effects if you take REYATAZ with this cholesterol-lowering medicine.
- Medicines for abnormal heart rhythm: Cordarone® (amiodarone), lidocaine, quinidine (also known as Cardioquin®, Quinidex®, and others).
- Coumadin® (warfarin).
- Tricyclic antidepressants such as Elavil® (amitriptyline), Norpramin® (desipramine), Sinequan® (doxepin), Surmontil® (trimipramine), Tofranil® (imipramine), or Vivactil® (protriptyline).
- Medicines to prevent organ transplant rejection: Sandimmune® or Neoral® (cyclosporine), Rapamune® (sirolimus), or Prograf® (tacrolimus).

**The following medicines may require a change in the dose or dose schedule of either REYATAZ or the other medicine:**
- Sustiva® (efavirenz).
- Fortovase®, Invirase® (saquinavir).
- Norvir® (ritonavir).
- Mycobutin® (rifabutin).
- Calcium channel blockers such as Cardizem® or Tiazac® (diltiazem), Covera-HS® or Isoptin SR® (verapamil) and others.
- Biaxin® (clarithromycin).
- oral contraceptives ("the pill").
- Videx® (didanosine) or antacids.
- Medicines for indigestion, heartburn, or ulcers such as Axid® (nizatidine), Pepcid AC® (famotidine), Tagamet® (cimetidine), or Zantac® (ranitidine).

**Remember:**
**1. Know all the medicines you take.**
**2. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take.**
**3. Do not start a new medicine without talking to your healthcare provider.**

**How should I store REYATAZ?**
- Store REYATAZ Capsules at room temperature, 59° to 86° F (15° to 30° C). Do **not** store this medicine in a damp place such as a bathroom medicine cabinet or near the kitchen sink.
- Keep your medicine in a tightly closed container.
- Throw away REYATAZ when it is outdated or no longer needed by flushing it down the toilet or pouring it down the sink.

**General information about REYATAZ**
This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use REYATAZ for another condition. Do not give REYATAZ to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them. **Keep REYATAZ and all medicines out of the reach of children and pets.**

This summary does not include everything there is to know about REYATAZ. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Remember, no written summary can replace careful discussion with your healthcare provider. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider or you can call 1-800-426-7644.

**What are the ingredients in REYATAZ?**
**Active Ingredient**: atazanavir sulfate

**Inactive Ingredients**: Crospovidone, lactose monohydrate (milk sugar), magnesium stearate, gelatin, FD&C Blue #2, and titanium dioxide.

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This Patient Information Leaflet has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

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Bristol-Myers Squibb Company
Princeton, NJ 08543
U.S.A.

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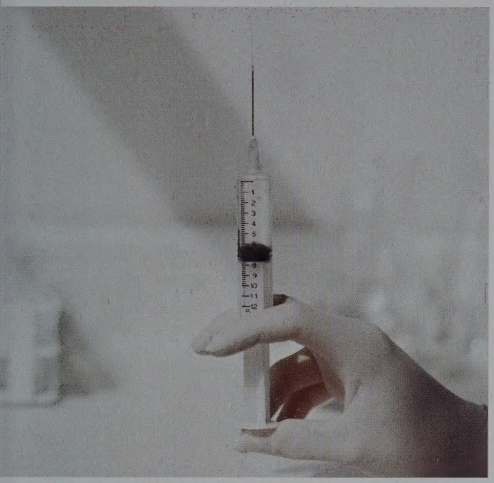
# HORMONES



will be coursing through the LGBT community this June, but an increasing amount of it will be coming out of a prescription bottle. In parade after parade, HIV patients maintaining new weight will march beside circuit queens pumped up beyond anything their genetic structures imagined. Aging lesbians and gay men, suddenly revitalized to their pre-menopausal/andropausal condition, will be followed by hordes of the transgendered and intersexed glowing with newly "corrected" body chemistries. Like millions of other Americans, they are engaged in what some call the largest "living experiment" in pharmaceutical tinkering, and loving every minute of it.

But if you look closely at our fountain-of-youth faces, you'll notice a few new wrinkles of worry. Two years ago, menopausal women were greeted with the news that the hormone replacement therapies (HRT) which were supposed to maintain their health were actually putting them at greater risk for breast cancer and stroke. Meanwhile, cardiologists were noticing an influx of athletic, anabolically enhanced HIV patients with enlarged hearts and sometimes staggering cholesterol levels. And the long parade of cancer deaths among the transgendered continued unabated.

But are the bad-news announcements borne out in the real world? Are the risks genuine, or is a conservative, headline-hungry press making mountains out of molehills? Is the press playing Cassandra, or the Boy Who Cried Wolf?

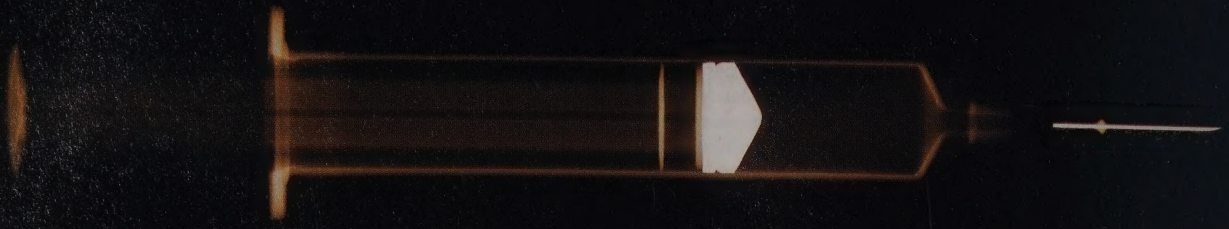
According to Dr. Alex del Rosario, an HIV physician from Los Angeles who speaks regularly on testosterone replacement, the surge in HRT for HIV patients began several years ago with researcher Don Kotler's study showing that "survival correlated to lean body weight: the more you had, the longer your survival." The theory behind these results made medical sense, says del Rosario, "because muscle, unlike fat, can be broken down and reformulated into other tissues. For instance, if you sustain a lung injury, your body can break down muscle and use it; your lung will repair faster. If you don't have a lot of muscle tissue to begin with, that repair is a lot slower, and you have to rely on what protein you can absorb through food," which is usually no more than about 50 grams at a time.

Trying to give HIV patients that extra "cushion" of lean body weight to prepare them for illness, then, is what initially led to interest in prescribing anabolic steroids and testosterone.

But in the years that followed, a small revolution in thinking about male hormones began to take place, as clinicians like author and HormoneDiva.com website proprietor Dr. Larrian Gillespie began to trumpet the dangers of letting any man's hormone levels fall too far. "We know the average range for testosterone in an adult male is between 400 and 600. And when men get below 400, they develop Irritable Male Syndrome: depression, sleep disturbances, they put on fat, they have no energy — it's the old male go-into-the-cave syndrome." And, she adds, it doesn't have to be.

Gillespie is adamant that the problems with testosterone replacement are all to do with the poor way it is often administered. Both oral and injectable forms of testosterone are not only rough on the liver, but deliver a super-physiologic burst of testosterone that ironically causes a rapid increase in a man's estrogen levels. An increase in female hormones in a man's body can lead, she says, "to heart disease, prostate enlargement and diabetes," not to mention testicular atrophy, loss of sex drive, gynocomastia (female breast development) and an increase in subcutaneous fat. And that gain in fat starts a vicious cycle, she adds, because "even adding ten pounds of fat to a man's body increases his production of estrogen."

However, transdermal forms of testosterone — available in patch form or as a rub-on gel



# IF THE INFORMATION ON HRT FOR WOMEN IS INSUFFICIENT, IT IS ALMOST STONE AGE FOR TRANSGENDERED PEOPLE

(Androgel) — both bypass the sensitive liver and avoid the ultra-high blood levels that produce most side effects. For men who can't get their blood levels high enough this way, Gillespie counsels them to slather on a second gel pack. "Some HIV drugs affect vasodilation in the skin and prevent adequate transference. I know a firefighter whose hypothalamus was damaged from smoke inhalation; one pack doesn't do it, but two packs does." If you get sick of the gel, however, other methods are on the way. Del Rosario touts a new lozenge "that dissolves in your mouth and attaches to your gums for about 12 hours of testosterone delivery," while Gillespie is excited about a nasal spray version "that goes directly into the hypothalamus, so you get the best, and best targeted, uptake."

Unfortunately, health insurance plans are loathe to fully cover Androgel, which, according to 4LifeRX, averages $214 per month; most cash-strapped AIDS Drug Assistance Programs won't cover it at all. "The injectable form is by far the cheapest," explains del Rosario, even though the enlarged hearts he sees "are more commonly in patients who are on higher levels of testosterone replacement, especially the injectables." Even with injectables, though, this correlation is less than clear because "most of the people who are taking testosterone replacement therapy and anabolic steroids are also HIV patients taking quite a few medications." Perversely, the hard workouts they undergo at the gym to maintain their health also muddy the waters. "Any time you have high levels of resistance weight training, there is going to be some compensatory thickening of the heart myocardium." And as these patients approach their 40s and 50s, "it becomes difficult to distinguish between the traditional risk factors of age, family history, elevated cholesterol and smoking, and the effects of taking multiple HIV medications, taking testosterone, and simply having HIV itself."

But is testosterone replacement partly responsible for these patients living longer in the first place? "The jury's still out on that one," says del Rosario, even though the resulting improvements in quality of life are evident. Gillespie points to the fact that no studies have directly tied any side effects to transdermal forms of testosterone replacement that deliver normal physiologic levels. And the biggest danger, she contends, is in allowing a patient's hormone balance to go off. "Women need to have low levels of testosterone, just as men need to have low levels of the female hormone estradiol. But it's when each of these hormones gets out of range in the appropriate sex that you have the same type of diseases developing — diabetes, hypertension, strokes, etc. Just different causes because of the sex difference."

Her favorite example? "In treating men for prostate cancer, we tried castration and then giving the men estrogen. So fine, they didn't die from prostate cancer; instead, they died from heart attacks."

In some respects, estrogen replacement therapy is better studied than testosterone therapy, even though the true results have a hard time getting past drug company reps to women. One menopausal lesbian I spoke to avoids hormone therapy entirely due to a family history of breast cancer. Yet Gillespie points out that *JAMA*'s recent 20-year analysis of female HRT, which showed an increased risk of breast cancer, looked only at combination therapy of synthetic hormones — including the progestins about which Gillespie has spent years warning women. The analysis left unexamined the natural estrogen therapy Gillespie has recommended for a dozen years: 17-beta estradiol. Even with the synthetic hormones, Gillespie contends that "progestin is the main problem," and the results of a long-term study of synthetic estrogen only, released in March, seem to bear her out by showing no increase in breast cancer or heart attacks. While no therapy is without some risks — and the March hormone-only study was stopped due to an increased risk of strokes — she maintains that if a woman "bastes, not marinates" in a low dose of natural 17-beta estradiol, she'll receive the maximum benefit with the lowest risk.

"There are at least 220 articles about the carcinogenic problems of synthetic estrogens in PubMed" (the online publishing arm of the National Library of Medicine), while more recently, *JAMA* published a three-year study on low-dose estradiol that showed women gained the bone-density benefits of estrogen therapy, but again without any incidences of breast cancer or endometrial hyperplasia.

But getting a doctor to prescribe it for you is the tricky part. "They demand that we all have to be on progesterone, when the studies show that that is completely wrong, if you keep 17-beta estradiol blood levels in the effective range of between 70 and 114 picograms per milliliter — which is exactly where every woman is on day seven of her menstrual cycle." (Usually, this requires a dose of no more than .5 mg.) To help women negotiate with their doctors, Gillespie reproduces many of the supporting studies in her books *The Menopause Diet* and *You're Not Crazy, It's Your Hormones,* a kind of self-empowerment workbook for women who want to take charge of their therapy. If your doctor still refuses to work with you, she says "There are some wonderful places that will do consultations without a doctor's referral for reasonable fees. And there are all kinds of studies and medications you can order on your own from Europe that we don't have here strictly because of cost. To give you an idea: estradiol gel has been available from a company in France for years; for almost two month's worth, it's $7." Smelling the money to be made, US pharmaceuticals have recently licensed the gel for stateside distribution — but at a $60 per month price tag.

Still, best-selling author Dr. Susan Love — an early opponent of long-term HRT — continues to have her doubts. She writes, "Estradiol may be identical to the predominant estrogen your body makes premenopausally, but it probably isn't natural to have high levels of estradiol throughout life." (Gillespie recommends women cut their .5 mg dose in half at age 70.) While acknowledging many of the benefits, and not averse to short-term therapy, she is quick to remind us that we won't know the full picture until someone funds a long-term, placebo-controlled trial of estradiol. In the meantime, she wonders if menopause wasn't "programmed into our lifecycle for a reason," that women's cells can't take reproductive-age estrogen levels for their entire life span, and that the low levels of hormones "produced by the ovaries throughout life may offer sufficient protection for many women."

If the information on HRT for women is scattered and insufficient, it is almost Stone Age for transgendered people.

While large numbers of transsexual patients, both male and female, have achieved their desired results from different-gender hormone therapy, it's hard to distinguish which risks are specific to them. Says Female-to-Male transsexual Raven Kaldera, "the first thing that people say when they hear about being given testosterone is that one has a heightened risk of heart attack and

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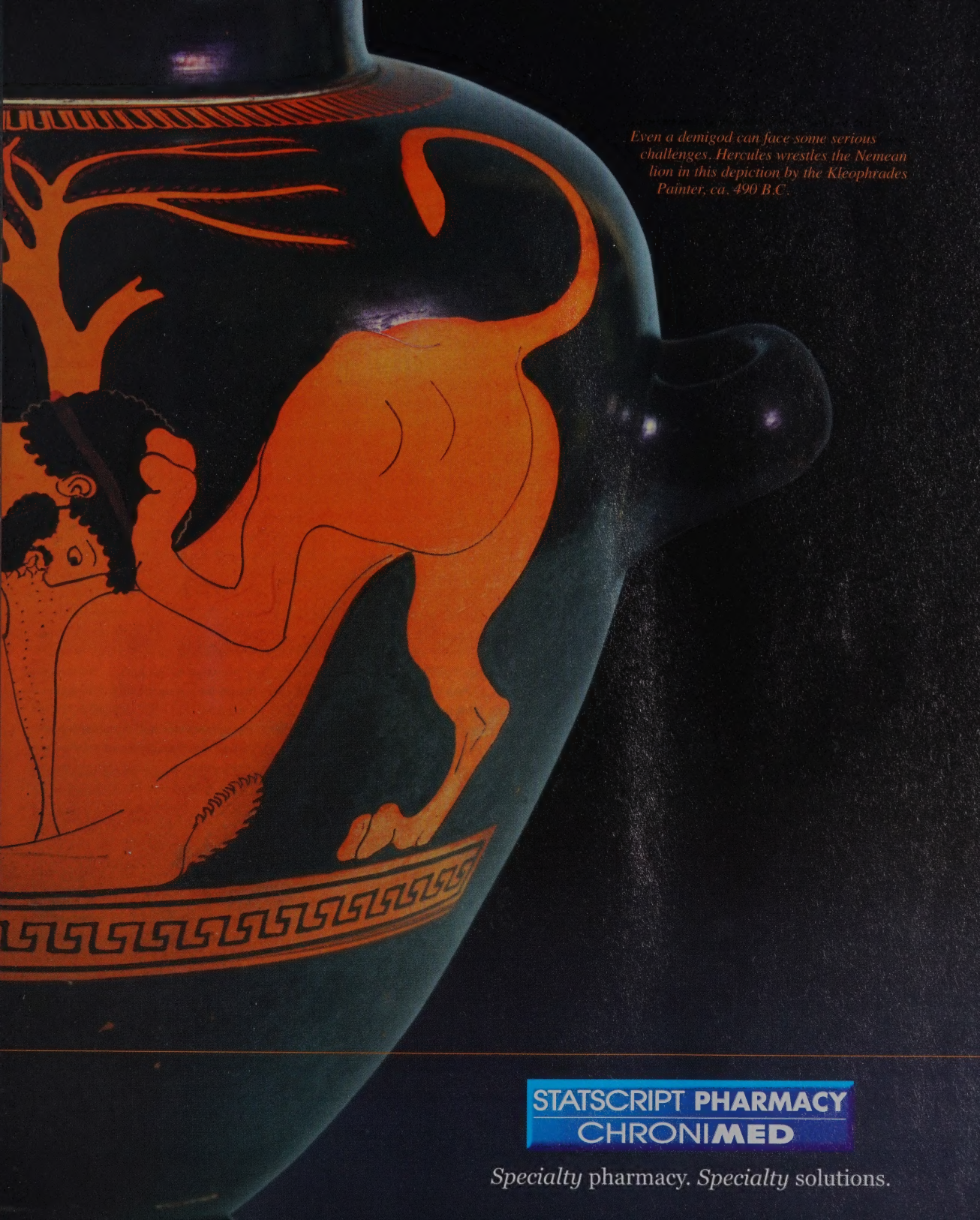

*Even a demigod can face some serious challenges. Hercules wrestles the Nemean lion in this depiction by the Kleophrades Painter, ca. 490 B.C.*

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stroke. While that's technically true, that just means that your risk goes up from average female risk to average male risk. I don't see anyone telling men who are at risk to cut their balls off an get that poisonous testosterone out of their system.

"The only way to discover the long term side effects," he continues, "is to track a whole lot of FTM individuals their entire life on testosterone and then compile the statistics later. We are aware that we are a generation of guinea pigs, but then so is everyone in the country in one way or another. The risk of being on T long-term, as I see it, are far less than the risks of living in a body that makes you unhappy."

Indeed, one of the hallmarks of the transgendered's decision to transition is reaching the point where the only other option seems to be suicide. Female-to-Male transsexual rock legend Jayne County figures that's why so many TG people find it "easier just to get their hormones o the black market. Yes, you should get your blood tested every now and then, but most doctors just want to stick you with a needle every time you see them, and that's why a lot of girls woul just rather avoid going."

This kind of self-prescribing, combined with little or no monitoring, may be the primary cause of most TGs' hormone-related complications, and it is the polar opposite of what Male-to-Female Rachel White managed for herself. Beginning her transition at 60, she was financially able to arrange a highly experienced set of doctors who have slowly ramped up and subtly tweaked her regimen over the past two years. "But my doctor still tells me, 'Rachel, there's just no research data, so I have to do this clinically. It may not happen as fast as you think it should, but be patient with me and it will always be as safe as I can make it.'" While the last two years have resulted in no dangerous side effects, there are plenty of problems she must manage that would be impossible to handle outside of the health care system: strange leg and back cramps, sodium deficiencies, a need to drink large amounts of fluid on a daily basis. In addition, she is financially comfortable enough to add to her pharmacoepia expensive anti-androgenic drugs that keep her hormones carefully balanced. On the FTM side, Kaldera finds his testosterone therapy alone is adequate; TransHealth.com's FTM columnist Raverdyke thinks that "more physicians should consider [adding anti-estrogenic drugs to FTM regimens], especially if they are supervising hormone regimens that utilize supra-physiological doses of hormones." These include estrogen-receptor blockers such as the breast cancer drugs Clomid or Tamoxifen, or aromatase blockers such as Armidex or Cytadren, which inhibit the conversio of testosterone to estrogen. (Del Rosario notes, however, that aromatase blockers can be rough on the liver and would require further monitoring.) None of this is exactly cheap, of course, and transgendered people are more often than not barely getting by financially. But everyone interviewed seemed to believe this was all the more reason for a transitioning transsexual to move slowly with therapy.

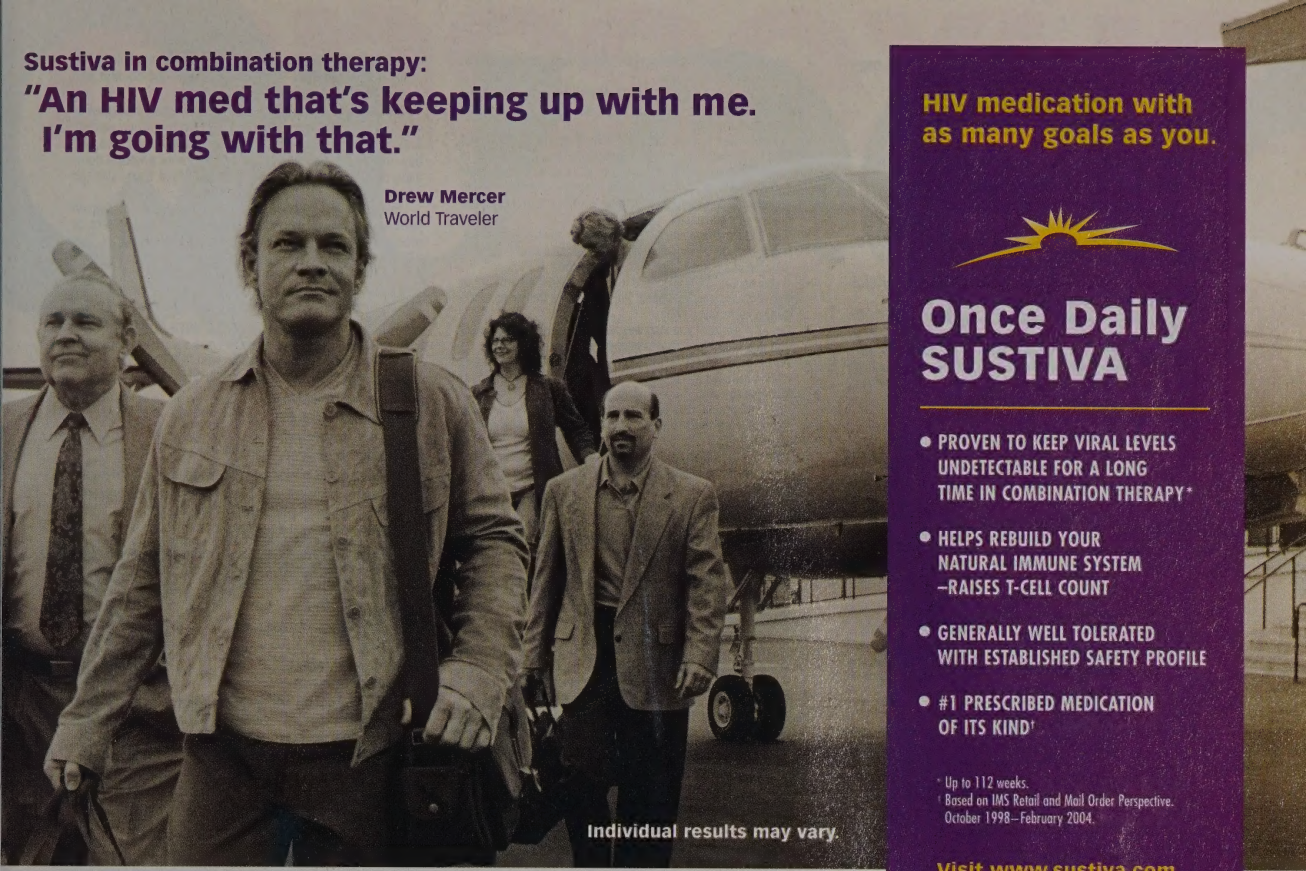
Still, it is entirely possible that hormone therapy for transsexuals will not always bear equal risks. There is a growing body of research suggesting that transgendered people may be to some degree intersexed, meaning they may have physiological gender differences that would make their bodies more receptive to therapy. Rachel White notes the autopsies of MTF transsexuals that found "the hypothalamus is the same size as a female's, which is 50 percent smaller. And they've done enough autopsies to know it's not the result of later hormone use." (No similar studies of FTMs has yet taken place.) White thinks this may be why she and so many of her friends have taken to estrogen "like a duck to water. It felt like my body said, 'Finally, we've got the chemistry we've been looking for all this time!'"

While most of the science around TG hormone therapy is cursory at best, it is remarkable how similar the discussions are to those about more traditional HRT issues. After every new study is set alongside the old ones, no patient is left with an all-purpose, yes-or-no answer, but a series of qualifiers that sometimes inhibit a decision as much as they inform it. Do you want these benefits, and are you willing to pay with these side effects? Are you willing to guess abo the long-term consequence of being on therapy? Are you willing to risk the long-term damage of aging without it? And as the HMO model tightens around every American's medical care, shortening the precious minutes we have to quiz our doctors with each passing day, the research-it-yourself lessons of the '80s AIDS crisis have only become more relevant.

*Dudley Saunders is a journalist, director and filmmaker living in Los Angeles.*

**Sustiva in combination therapy:**

# "An HIV med that's keeping up with me. I'm going with that."

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- HELPS REBUILD YOUR NATURAL IMMUNE SYSTEM –RAISES T-CELL COUNT
- GENERALLY WELL TOLERATED WITH ESTABLISHED SAFETY PROFILE
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* Up to 112 weeks.
† Based on IMS Retail and Mail Order Perspective. October 1998–February 2004.

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**INDICATION:** SUSTIVA (efavirenz) is used in combination with other medicines to treat people who are infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

**SUSTIVA does not cure HIV or prevent passing HIV to others.**

**IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:** SUSTIVA should not be taken with Hismanal® (astemizole), Propulsid® (cisapride), Versed® (midazolam), Halcion® (triazolam), or ergot derivatives. Tell your doctor about any medications or herbal products (particularly St. John's wort) that you are taking.

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams. These feelings tend to go away after taking the medication for a few weeks. A small number of patients have reported severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior. There have been a few reports of suicide but it is not known if SUSTIVA (efavirenz) was the cause. Rash is another common side effect. Rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. If you or your child develop a rash, call your doctor right away.

Women should not become pregnant or breastfeed while taking SUSTIVA.

Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking anti-HIV medicines. The cause and long-term effects are not known at this time.

You should take SUSTIVA on an empty stomach, preferably at bedtime. Taking SUSTIVA with food increases the amount of medicine in your body, which may increase the frequency of side effects. Taking SUSTIVA at bedtime may make some side effects less bothersome.

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**Please see important information about SUSTIVA on the next page.**

SUSTIVA® (efavirenz) 600 mg tablets

**Ask your doctor if Once Daily SUSTIVA is right for you.**

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# PATIENT INFORMATION

# *SUSTIVA*® (sus-TEE-vah) [efavirenz (eh-FAH-vih-rehnz)] capsules and tablets

**ALERT: Find out about medicines that should NOT be taken with SUSTIVA.**

Please also read the section **"MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH SUSTIVA."**

Read this information before you start taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz). Read it again each time you refill your prescription, in case there is any new information. This leaflet provides a summary about SUSTIVA and does not include everything there is to know about your medicine. This information is not meant to take the place of talking with your doctor.

**What is SUSTIVA?**

SUSTIVA is a medicine used in combination with other medicines to help treat infection with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of anti-HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI).

SUSTIVA works by lowering the amount of HIV in the blood (viral load). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4 cells, a type of immune cell in blood. SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

SUSTIVA does not cure HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections and complications. Therefore, it is very important that you stay under the care of your doctor.

SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Therefore, continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

**What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?**

**Serious psychiatric problems.** A small number of patients experience severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior while taking SUSTIVA. Some patients have thoughts of suicide and a few have actually committed suicide. These problems tend to occur more often in patients who have had mental illness. Contact your doctor right away if you think you are having these psychiatric symptoms, so your doctor can decide if you should continue to take SUSTIVA.

**Common side effects.** Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams during treatment with SUSTIVA. These side effects may be reduced if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime on an empty stomach. They also tend to go away after you have taken the medicine for a few weeks. If you have these common side effects, such as dizziness, it does not mean that you will also have serious psychiatric problems, such as severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior. Tell your doctor right away if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. It is possible that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs.

If you are dizzy, have trouble concentrating, or are drowsy, avoid activities that may be dangerous, such as driving or operating machinery.

Rash is common. Rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor right away. **Rash may be a serious problem in some children.** Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea.

**Changes in body fat.** Changes in body fat develop in some patients taking anti-HIV medicine. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), in the breasts, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these fat changes are not known.

Tell your doctor or healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

Contact your doctor before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects or for any other reason.

This is not a complete list of side effects possible with SUSTIVA. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for a more complete list of side effects of SUSTIVA and all the medicines you will take.

**How should I take SUSTIVA (efavirenz)?**

***General Information***

- You should take SUSTIVA on an empty stomach, preferably at bedtime.
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water.
- Taking SUSTIVA with food increases the amount of medicine in your body, which may increase the frequency of side effects.
- Taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz) at bedtime may make some side effects less bothersome.
- SUSTIVA must be taken in combination with other anti-HIV medicines. If you take only SUSTIVA, the medicine may stop working.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away, unless it is almost time for your next dose. Do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- If you believe you took more than the prescribed amount of SUSTIVA, contact your local Poison Control Center or emergency room right away.
- Tell your doctor if you start any new medicine or change how you take old ones. Your doses may need adjustment.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.
- Your doctor may want to do blood tests to check for certain side effects while you take SUSTIVA.

***Capsules***

- The dose of SUSTIVA capsules for adults is 600 mg (three 200-mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).

***Tablets***

- The dose of SUSTIVA tablets for adults is 600 mg (one tablet) once a day by mouth.

**Can children take SUSTIVA?**

Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

**Who should not take SUSTIVA?**

**Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic** to the active ingredient, efavirenz, or to any of the inactive ingredients. Your doctor and pharmacist have a list of the inactive ingredients.

**What should I avoid while taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz)?**

- **Women taking SUSTIVA should not become pregnant.** Serious birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. **Tell your doctor right away if you are pregnant.** Also talk with your doctor if you want to become pregnant.
- Women should not rely only on hormone-based birth control, such as pills, injections, or implants, because SUSTIVA may make these contraceptives ineffective. Women must use a reliable form of barrier contraception, such as a condom or diaphragm, even if they also use other methods of birth control.
- **Do not breast-feed if you are taking SUSTIVA.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that mothers with HIV not breast-feed because they can pass the HIV through their milk to the baby. Also, SUSTIVA may pass through breast milk and cause serious harm to the baby. Talk with your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You may need to stop breast-feeding or use a different medicine.
- Taking SUSTIVA with alcohol or other medicines causing similar side effects as SUSTIVA, such as drowsiness, may increase those side effects.
- Do not take any other medicines without checking with your doctor. These medicines include prescription and non-prescription medicines and herbal products, especially St. John's wort.

**Before using SUSTIVA, tell your doctor if you**

- **have problems with your liver or have hepatitis.** Your doctor may want to do tests to check your liver while you take SUSTIVA.
- **have ever had mental illness or are using drugs or alcohol.**
- **have ever had seizures or are taking medicine for seizures** [for example, Dilantin® (phenytoin), Tegretol® (carbamazepine), or phenobarbital]. Your doctor may want to check drug levels in your blood from time to time.

**What important information should I know about taking other medicines with SUSTIVA?**

**SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines, including ones for HIV, and cause serious side effects.** Your doctor may change your other medicines or change their doses. Other medicines, including herbal products, may affect SUSTIVA. For this reason, **it is very important to:**

- let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
- tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.

Bring all your prescription and nonprescription medicines as well as any herbal remedies that you are taking when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

Taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz) with St. John's wort *(Hypericum perforatum)*, an herbal product sold as a dietary supplement, or products containing St. John's wort is not recommended. Talk with your doctor if you are taking or are planning to take St. John's wort. Taking St. John's wort may decrease SUSTIVA levels and lead to increased viral load and possible resistance to SUSTIVA or cross-resistance to other anti-HIV drugs.

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- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

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Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

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# The New Queer Dictionary

What are words worth? Plenty — especially if you're using old ones and creating new ones to define exactly who you are. But is this new *Identity Lexicon* clarifying the facts or obsuring them further? Depends on who you are, **Stacie Stukin** concludes...

Late last year, the New York Department of State denied nonprofit status to a new group called "Queer Awareness" because they felt the term "queer" was pejorative and could be deemed "indecent or obscene." Worse, they stated, it could potentially "degrade and ridicule." Apparently the bureaucrats in Albany, New York: a) live in a cave; b) don't know anyone who's gay; and/or, c) failed to notice that a little makeover show with that "bad" word in the title has become a cultural phenomenon, giving "queer" a decidedly positive public spin. It wasn't until the founder of Queer Awareness threatened to sue, claiming the name ban violated his First Amendment rights, that the state backed down and acknowledged in January that, d) the Q-word is mainstream enough not to be considered objectionable.

Queer Awareness is now as queer as they wanna be. Their struggle to claim their name is a telling reminder that self-identifying terms (or gender, for that matter) are as fluid as a Ricky Martin hip swivel. It also shows that sometimes there is a dichotomy between what people are called by others and what they choose to call themselves. That's when it gets confusing. Just imagine those New York bureaucrats scratching their heads saying, "Gee, those homosexuals are perplexing. What happened to that GLBT term?"

And what about that neighbor you hear screwing her girlfriend all night? You call her a lesbian but she may tell you she's not a Lesbian, she's a plain old Dyke Daddy Top. And that hot Boi cruising you, is he a gay biological male? Or is he a Dyke who is Female-to-Male (FTM) transgendered — with hormones or without? And what's the difference between a Transfag and a Boi? In an effort to clarify and edify, Pride offers you this ID lingo primer. We're not claiming it's definitive (that would require a doctoral dissertation) but we can say that we've talked to academics, clinicians, activists and regular old queers in an effort to help all of us better understand. ▸

**QUEER**: The dictionary definition is "odd" or "peculiar," but the word became a derogatory term for gays in the 20th century. Even though masculine gay men used "queer" in the 1930s and '40s to differentiate themselves from "fairies," it continued to be a slur until the late '80s. That's when gay activists reclaimed the term to signify radical politics, direct action, and a refusal to be boxed in by conventional social norms. The most visible example is Queer Nation. Remember, "We're here, we're queer. We're proud of it, get used to it"? In the 21st century "queer" has taken on an even broader meaning, becoming an umbrella term that includes anyone — straight, gay, bi, trans — whose sexual behavior or attitudes would never meet the criteria for acceptability set by Focus on the Family.

**GAY**: A synonym for "joy," co-opted by men and women who didn't want to be called "homosexual" because of its association with a mental illness or pathology. Today the term is often associated exclusively with gay men, making it an unpopular identifier among gay (née lesbian) women and the transgendered. As one 20-something dyke-identified activist who's attracted to FTM trannies said, "Gay is passé; no one wants to be called that."

***Other variations for gay men:*** Fag, Queen, Bear (masculine, hairy fat men), Otter (skinny, hairy men who like Bears), Boi (pejorative [or not] name for a man who dresses and acts like a boy, harkening back to the eroticism of his youth); Pink Pistol (gay men — or women — who carry guns to protect themselves against gay bashing); B-boy (aka Banjee-boy, a masculine man, usually African-American or Latino, with urban, hip-hop taste, who has sex with other men), Butch Queen (comes from the ball scene and denotes a black gay man who lives as a macho, straight-appearing man).

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**LESBIAN:** The word originated from the Greek island of Lesbos, where Sappho lived and wrote poetry that expressed an erotic interest in other women. Today, it simply means women who are sexually and affectionately attracted to women. But the connotation of the word is also changing. "Lesbian is a word only used on Showtime," jokes Susan Stryker, a San Francisco–based LGBT historian. While she considers herself a queer lesbian, she points out that the term has been defanged of its political origins in the '60s, '70s and '80s. "Now it's cute, chic, acceptable. Lesbians have good haircuts and their own TV show."

**DYKE:** The edgy alternative to lesbian, though use with caution. Some women (generally those 40 and older) still prefer lesbian and may deem Dyke a slur. Self-identified Dykes are more political and aggressive about sexuality, and more likely to embrace a variety of gender and sexual expressions which include feminine women, transsexual women, Butch, FTM transgendered people — basically anyone who is queer-female bodied and/or identified.

***Other Dyke variations:*** Boi (a boyish Dyke or a boyish female who takes on the boy role in a relationship; when Bois are attracted to other Bois, they're called Fags); Boydyke (another variation of Boi); Transdyke (a bisexual or lesbian FTM transsexual); Mandate (a Butch Dyke in the African-American community)

**TRANSSEXUAL:** The conventional or clinical meaning is someone who was born one gender but feels psychologically and emotionally that they are the opposite gender; transsexuals subsequently acquire the characteristics of the opposite sex through medical intervention. However, "transsexual" has now come to encompass those who may eschew various types of medical intervention as well, and rework their sexual identity either with or without hormones or surgery. "For many, transsexuality defines a process more than a fixed identity, and this can mean, and often does mean, transitioning from one sex to the other, with little or no announcement of the process," explains Don Romesberg, a PhD candidate at the University of California at Berkeley who specializes in 20th-century gay history. "For others, particularly outcasts, activists and rebels, transsexual is a category of identification in the same way that male or female is."

***Other variations:*** FTM/F2M (female-to-male transitioning); MTF/M2F (male-to-female transitioning); LoHo (someone taking a low dose of hormones); NoHo (someone who chooses not to take hormones but who will still claim the "other" pronoun); Pre-op (before sex-change surgery); Post-op (after sex-change surgery).

**TRANSGENDER:** An umbrella category that describes anyone who just doesn't — or doesn't want to — fit into the neatly defined two-sex category.

***Variations:*** Cross Dressers/Transvestites (both terms describe someone who dresses in clothes of the opposite sex); Drag Queen (a cross dresser who is definitely gay and affects traditionally "feminine" mannerisms); Trannie Drag (performers who have had plastic surgery and/or take hormones to further personify their stage performance); Faux Queen (a biological woman who performs as a Drag Queen); Drag King (a biological woman who performs with the exaggerated features of masculinity).

**INTERSEX:** Someone born with ambiguous genitals. The variance may be external, internal or both. Unfortunately, many children deemed intersex go under the knife in childhood for sex reassignment surgeries, which can jeopardize their sexual enjoyment and deny them the right to choose and express their gender identity.

***Other variations:*** Hermaphrodites (technically this refers to someone who has both gonad and ovarian tissue, which is in fact rare in intersex people; however, the term has been appropriated by intersex activists who are trying to stop the mutilating surgeries. They often call themselves Hermaphrodites With Attitude).

This pastiche lexicon of queer self-identification is evidence of empowerment for people of all gender persuasions who are claiming their namesake, owning it, and proving that gender is as much about what's between the ears as it is about what's between the thighs. But it's also proof that language is a finite tool; the vocabulary of gender and sexuality can be confusing even to members of the queer family.

Then why all the labels? Carol McCord, a 47-year-old lesbian who came out when lesbian was just the lowercase "l-word," likens the situation to the many terms for snow used by Eskimos (more properly referred to as Inuits). "The more attentive you are to any particular issue, the more able and interested you are in defining it," says McCord, a sex therapist at the Kinsey Institute Sexual Health Center. "If I tell you I'm queer I want you to know what that means to me specifically."

The gender-defining language of clinicians and the medical establishment often fails because it insists on sticking to a binary male/female model. Consequently, it's no surprise that people are groping for flexibility in the expression of their personal identification. But language does not exist or develop in a vacuum. It requires an audience to have merit, and that means context.

So, when the Discovery Channel interviewed McCord for a transgender show, you can bet she did not use terms like Trans-boy or Loho. "The average American still doesn't understand the difference between transgender and gay," she says. "That's why we need to use different language at different times."

And there's the rub. As much as all this gender-defining nomenclature signifies the freedom and opportunity to be more honest about who we want to be, what's the purpose of these labels if we're the only ones who know what they mean? Or is that the point? The conversation will certainly continue, both within the queer community (whatever that might mean), and between the queer community and the culture at large.

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# STR8 ACTING GAY

Maybe the religious right is onto something; as we queers get straighter and straighter with our marriages and children, our heterosexual friends seem increasingly eager to grab a piece of the gay life... **Mark Simpson**, the homosexual "bastard father of Metrosexuality" tries not to panic...

# GAY ACTING STR8

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I have a pitch for a sure-fire hit TV show. It's a queer makeover/reality/sitcom/dating kinda thing. I can't say too much about it right now because, as you can imagine, my agent is having meetings with an army of producers, but rest assured it will portray a world full of catty one-liners, gorgeous lipstick lesbians and sassy, stylish gay men who occassionally have sex (usually without touching or undressing), but mostly go shopping with straight women and discuss fashion tips and interior decor and share heartwarming intimacies over their lattes. Oh, and one straight guy who will be a complete dork. I'm calling it *Queer Eyefull* and it will be coming to your TV screen soon and will be compulsory viewing.

I'm already too late, of course. The *L Word*, *Queer as Folk*, *Boy Meets Boy*, *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, *Will & Grace*, *So Graham Norton* — are you still there? — have already colonized the TV schedules, turning them into a parody of their own. But it isn't just TV; pretty much the whole of pop culture appears to have been taken over by the gayers. Pop music is full of preening half-naked boy bands managed by fat poofs, and singing vixens in harnesses queuing up to have their tonsils tickled by the Bitch Queen Madonna. Hollywood for its part is falling over itself to make blockbuster movies about bisexual ancient Greek warriors in leather skirts and cowboys who share more than the same horseblanket. Meanwhile, in the world of magazines, sport — and now politics — a new kind of star has risen and taken its place in the pop firmament: glossy metrosexual males who just want to be loved, principally by themselves. It might be said that lavender is the new black, except that black was never, ever as popular, as ubiquitous, as downright compulsory as lavender has become.

To be frighteningly honest, it's even worse than I've made out. It isn't simply, you see, that gays have gone mainstream, scary enough as that is. Things are much, much more alarming. What's really happening is this: straights have Gone Gay. Stark, raving gay — no vaseline. (Or rather, they've gone queer.)

Perhaps this is why most of the star "gays" in this "gay heatwave" as *Vanity Fair* dubbed it, are hetero. Eric McCormack, who portrays *Will and Grace*'s Will Truman, is famously hetero in "real life," as is much of the cast of *Queer as Folk*. Madonna is famously not a lesbian (though her husband, judging by his taste in jackets, might be). David Beckham and Justin Timberlake are hetero. So, of course, are most of the people watching.

That straights have finally gone gay shouldn't really be so surprising. After all, thanks to our traditonal placement — firmly outside of the family, marriage and reproduction cycle — we are the ultimate lifestylers. Gay has become an aspiration for corporate America. The gay lifestyle is envied and coveted by everyone now, especially those too busy being married and having kids to pursue it. Consumption patterns, leisure activities and friendship circles are the way that identity is formed in the 21st century — for everyone. The real object of desire in *Queer as Folk*, the endowment that everyone — male, female, homo, or hetero — found swooningly irresistible was Stuart's loft apartment.

But straights have not just gone gay culturally. It's sexual as well. The whole shooting match. Straights are militant sodomites now. This is the real reason why the Supreme Court recently legalized it in all states of the union. Sodomy is such big business and so downright popular these days that it would be, well, simply un-American to legislate against it.

Sodomy is strictly, religiously defined as non-penile–vaginal, i.e. nonreproductive, sex. But is there any other kind these days? Or at least any other kind that people want to have? This goes all the way to the top. The last president of the United States, remember, was impeached for turning the Oval Office into the Oral Office. He stayed at his desk only because in the end no one could really blame him for turning down free blow jobs.

Straights have become sodomites in the more particular, more pungent sense of the word, too. My straight female friends constantly tell me how the backdoor is the new front door. In their rush to go gay straights are ignoring a perfectly good orifice in a much handier place and seem to have decided that, contrary to the findings of anatomical science, women have prostate glands too. My straight male friends for their part now tell me that the vagina was invented not for their penises but for the tongue (or strap-on).

Straights have even gone gay in terms of sheer turnover. You might once have thought that gays were at least safe with the trophy for Most Promiscuous and Shameless Behavior Award, but things have changed. Straights are really catching up; just look at the record figures for STDs like syphillis among heterosexuals. Here in the UK, straights are even competing with gays in the public sex olympics. A craze for "dogging" has swept the country: men and women meet in unused car parks and are watched and filmed by others while having sex. It is, I'm afraid, no longer the case that straights have to wait for the office party to get laid. Hence those dating programs, which are really not about "dating" at all, but about tricking and making it acceptable for women to be a bit slutty. *Sex in the City* was in effect a TV series remake of *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, the early '70s movie in which a single woman behaves like a gay man, hanging out in singles bars and taking pleasure in casual encounters. But in *Sex in the City*, instead of getting her "just desserts" and being stabbed to death by a latent homosexual pick-up (*Mr. Goodbar* was made in the '70s after all), the girl gets cruising tips from a swishy hag-fag pal who seems to be getting rather less than her.

(*Sex in the City*'s gays tended to be dowdy and sad, so that their straight women friends who are emulating their lifestyle aren't mistaken for hags. See also *Will & Grace*). ▶

# WHEN STRAIGHTS HAVE ALL GONE GAY, WHO NEEDS GAYS ANYMORE?

The Queer Eye guys, blurring the lines one makeover at a time.

In fact, when all's told, sometimes it seems as if the only thing holding straights back from full sexual equality with gays is that most bathroom facilities are currently not co-ed.

OK, so there does appear to be a Rubicon here in the rush of straights to go gay. In contrast to the well-documented explosion of "bi-curious" or "bi-flirtatious" behavior of straight women, non-gay men seem to be still a little less, ahem, relaxed in that department. But it can only be a matter of time. Perhaps in an attempt to fend off the inevitable, the reassuring cliché that women are "naturally" bisexual while men are not has been trotted out in a basque and made to perform cunnilingus rather a lot lately. Dr. Kinsey would have taken issue with this assertion, and not just because he was himself alarmingly tri-anything-sexual: his research, still unsurpassed in scale and thoroughness, showed that a whopping 37percent of 1940s American males admitted to "sexual contact to orgasm" with another male, compared to only 13 percent of women. Another 13 percent of men reported same-sex desires not acted on — taking the homo-interested total to 50 percent. The historical evidence is also to the contrary. Whole cultures, such as Ancient Greece, the Royal Navy and Hollywood, have been based on male bisexuality. To put it crudely, all men, whatever their sexual preference, love penises and are incredibly adept at manipulating them, even if it is usually only their own. Arguably most men are potentially bisexual at some stage of their life, and of the minority that aren't most of them are homosexual.

Besides, it's not as if late capitalism cares what the historical or psychological precedent is. Precisely because full, red-blooded man-on-man carnal *lurve* is one of the last taboos is a good enough reason for consumerism to go after it. There's precious little left these days that raises the pulse of our jaded culture. Besides, fashion magazines have been purveying self-consciously soft-core gay porn for quite a while now.

Yes, the portrayals of gay men on TV today are still usually rather spayed and unconvincing. But can it only be a matter of time before we see fisting on prime time? And will that be a good thing? Particularly if you happen to like fisting? Or will it, like so much else of the "straights going gay" phenomenon, make it hardly worth practicing any more?

The bottom line is that homosexuality and homoerotics are far, far too important and lucrative to be left to homosexuals. Criticism about the inaccuracy of gay representation on TV, or even about the way homosexuality itself has been pimped out to actors and an audience who aren't themselves homosexual, is almost to miss the point. Capitalism owns homosexuality now, like it owns pretty much everything else. Consumerism is the Daddy.

"Sexuality," in the way that it has been articulated for much of the last century as the key and immutable code in the construction of identity, and on which of course the entire gay movement and the notion of gay pride has been built, doesn't work its juju so well any more.

Even though we still enjoy some differences from heterosexuals, we're just not that special anymore.

We adopted the word "queer" in an attempt to beef things up, make ourselves more interesting. But arguably the real queers these days are straights. They are the ones who are realizing the real potential of "queer" as it was articulated in the early '90s. Queers themselves are still just dull old gays.

Consider, for instance, the *South Park* "Metrosexual" episode, in which all the men in the town turn metrosexual, and then their girlfriends and wives go to New York to kill the cast of *Queer Eye*. Maybe it wasn't out of anger at what they'd done to their men, as the cartoon implied, but actually because, in a world where men are most entranced by the mirror, women just are not necessary any more. But when straights have all gone gay, who needs gays any more?

In the UK a hit BBC comedy sketch show called *Little Britain* has a regular item featuring a pierced fat boy in tinfoil trousers and crop tops living in a remote Welsh village. His constant complaint is "I'm the only gay in the village." Of course, it's actually his brag. He keeps discovering that he isn't, that the village is in fact a positive haven of gaiety, but pretends not to notice. He wants to find discrimination and hatred where there is often indifference or warm support. Most of all, he wants to cling to his sense of uniqueness.

What's a poof to do?

Hit shows like *Will & Grace* are inspiring straights to go gay; what does it all mean?

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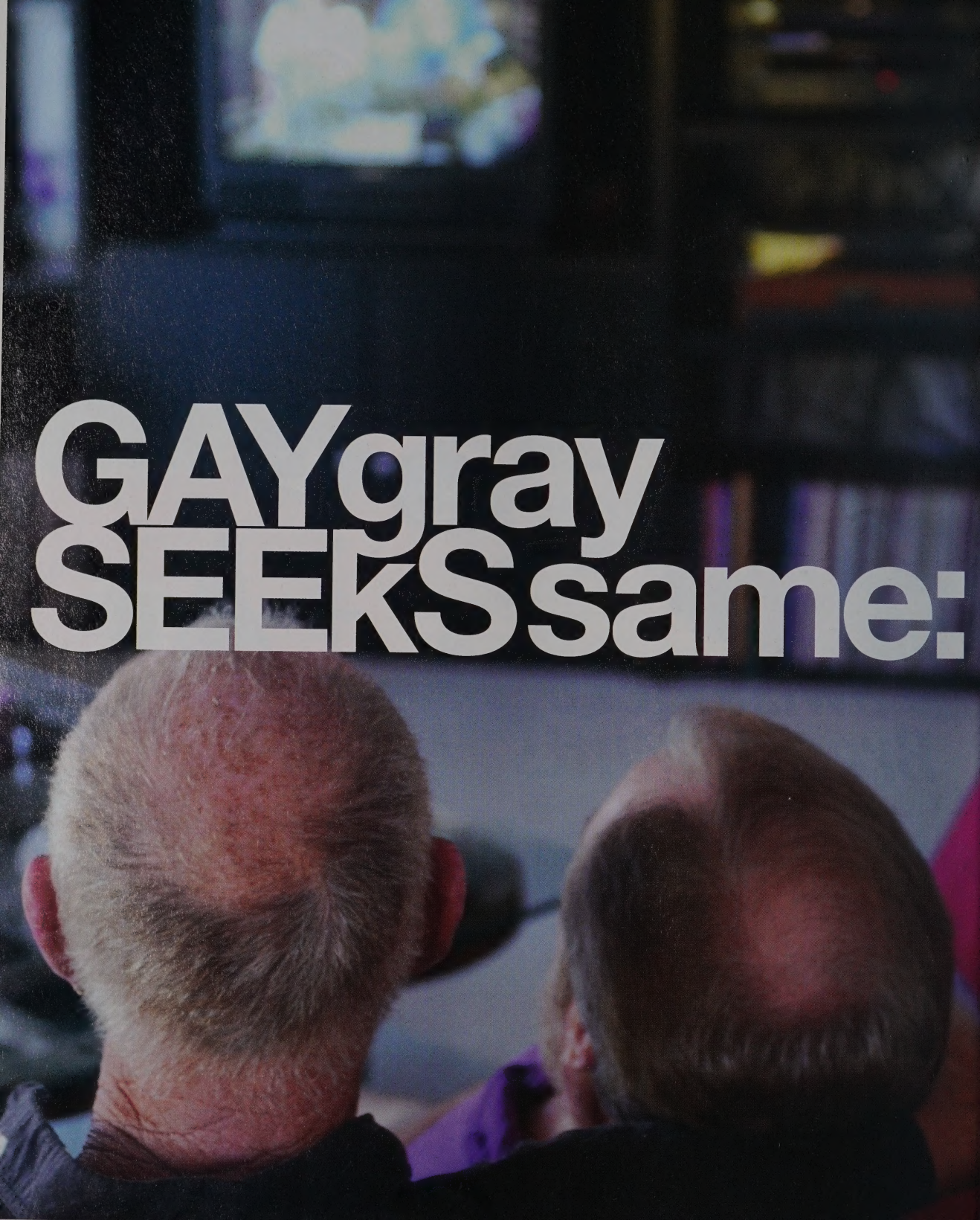
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*Is there any hope for finding love after 50? STEVE BOLERJACK, who is fast approaching the magic number himself, investigates…*

I like to call him my 'lover,'though younger people seem to prefer 'partner,'" says John Beezley, 61, of Steve Moore, 58. Together three years, they met at a party in Los Angeles, having missed each other for years even with many friends in common. Both had lost long-time partners. "Actually, I thought it was too late to meet someone and was becoming resigned to it," recalls John. "But we were immediately, surprisingly comfortable together. We even had a nice period of 'courtship' before moving ahead."

Dawn Bellett and Sandra Richter, now in their 50s/60s, got started earlier, partnered since meeting in San Francisco 25 years ago. "We're secure together, share the same interests, and still enjoy each other's company, even after all this time," says Dawn. "We don't want to think of not having one another some day," adds Sandra.

Tim Hedgecorth and Tim Barrow of St. Louis (known on license plates and online as "TIMx2") fell on the cusp, hooking up as both approached 50. Thirteen years after coming out, divorcing wives, and having a "holy commitment ceremony," they are now at the center of a large, extended family of children and grandchildren. "We've always been totally out in every aspect—family, friends, and work," says Tim B. "Ironically, we're known as the 'most normal' couple in the whole family, which is boring, but true!"

Sylvia Lopez, beautiful at 50-something, and Michelle (Micki) Smollar, inspiring at 60ish, have been together for five years, in southern California. They spent half that time in a growing, committed partnership, then had to learn quickly how to cope with new priorities when Micki became severely and suddenly ill.

Not bad reviews for one new show and three longer runs. That's great for all of them, but what about the rest of us? Apparently, it's *possible* for older gay people to find and keep love—in sickness and in health—but just how likely is it? Are these folks part of a trend, or just exceptionally lucky exceptions?

## *Burgeoning boomers*

And why even ask? Sheer numbers of us, for one thing. Based on 2000 U.S. Census data and the common ten percent estimate, there are approximately 29.4 million gay people in this country. Of these, 1.2 million declare themselves in same-sex households and approximately four million are over 60, a number to grow by 30 percent as baby boomers approach retirement. But while the new "same-sex household" census category was important for better gay and lesbian demographics, specifics on the hows and whys of gay partnering remain difficult to estimate. The data do show one unexpected statistic: only four percent of the gay and lesbian population are reporting their cohabitation. Lavender Seniors, a national organization focusing on elder gay issues, estimates that 65 percent of gay and lesbian seniors live by themselves, nearly twice the percentage of all other people over 65 who live alone. And while nearly 50 percent of the heterosexual elderly population live with life partners, this is true for only about 20 percent of gay men and lesbians. The actual number may be higher, but these data still suggest a growing number of unattached older gay folks without family or partners to look after them in their declining years. This isolation may be even more pronounced in minority gay and lesbian seniors.

Our perpetually youth-obsessed gay culture (it's true that men are worse about this than women) has tended to ignore not only older people, but older relationships as well. There are always those mixed-generation partnerships — seniors with juniors—and those can certainly be legitimate and happy couplings (or they can be about payment for services rendered). More importantly, there are many durable, stable, and happy relationships among gay men and lesbians, both of whom are seniors. I count among my friends numerous couples that mark anniversaries in decades.

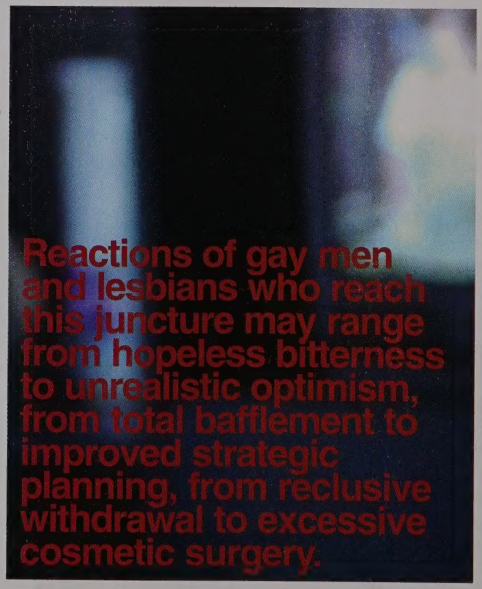
Still, most of these long-termers met when they were in their 20s or 30s, prime years of physical attractiveness, financial productivity, and willingness to commingle assets. Clearly, it's easier to find Mr./Ms. Right while in the bloom of youth. But what are your chances of finding love when you've got crow's feet and gray hair, and searching for anything requires reading glasses? When both are well into seniordom? Is it possible, not only to find a partner, but to maintain a loving and happy relationship past, say, age 50? A mere number perhaps, but it's human nature to take stock at milestones and mark off decades with that ending-in-zero thing. So now what?

### *Senior and solo*

Oscar Wilde referred to relationships as "entanglements," and some folks want no part of them. However, most people—gay or straight—eventually want some sort of romantic partnership, our sex-soaked culture notwithstanding. Yet despite years of trying, many of us middle-aged baby boomers find ourselves still single for all sorts of incompatibility reasons like lousy sex, insufficient financing, plain bad luck, and of course, death. There may be chilling memories of exes who ranged from merely bad to truly psychotic. In that way, we're no different from heterosexuals. And still we try.

"I dread being out in the single scene again," says Doug Smith, 54, a recent Atlanta transplant to southern California. Handsome, fit, and silver-haired, Doug seems eminently datable, but remains dubious. "You must be realistic and resign yourself to the fact that most gay men are not interested in someone over 50, even if you're still good looking," he says. Doug's attitude is common: frustration mixed with some surprise at reaching 50 and still dating. Dave Davis, 58 and a longtime veteran of LA and New York City gay circles agrees. "I've tried, but I'm now doubtful of finding a relationship," he says. "You no longer have the physical qualities, you're more set in your ways, and less willing to compromise. And you don't have the physical and sexual energy. Too many older guys are still about lust for the young, or as I like to put it, old farts chasing young chickens!"

Reactions of gay men and lesbians who reach this juncture may range from hopeless bitterness to unrealistic optimism, from total bafflement to improved strategic planning, from reclusive withdrawal to excessive cosmetic surgery. Most fall in the mixed-up middle ground. (And some still have reservations about coming out fully, hence the omission of a few surnames.) "It all sounds so sophomoric," says New Yorker Jerry W. at 52. "Throughout my 30s and 40s, I just presumed I'd eventually find the right one and be long coupled up by now," he says. "Casual sex has been fun, but now I don't want to be appear desperate, either for sex or love. I don't want to become pathetic."


Reactions of gay men and lesbians who reach this juncture may range from hopeless bitterness to unrealistic optimism, from total bafflement to improved strategic planning, from reclusive withdrawal to excessive cosmetic surgery.

Others are more upbeat, if guarded. At age 40, Tom S. lost his partner of seven years to AIDS. Later, he tried a series of relationships that lasted a few months, to a year or two. None equaled the love he'd had with his late partner. "Now at 51, I've lived alone for years and it would take someone very special to make me want to seriously date again, much less live with someone," he says. "I admit I'm set in my ways and less willing to make compromises."

Some older gay women have similarly limited expectations. "I can safely speak for both of us," says Sylvia, "that neither Micki nor I were inclined toward starting a relationship when we were introduced. We seemed past it. But maybe the Fates thought we'd be well matched."

"Terry" has the unique perspective of a gay man who's also a minister in a small town, in West Virginia. At 55, he's out to friends and even to some parishioners, but feels he still must be circumspect when it comes to relationships and the church hierarchy. "I admit to feeling a bit envious of other happy same-sex couples," he says. "But the desire for a relationship is no longer a huge factor in my life. If it happens, great, but my work and my ministry are very fulfilling. I don't anticipate feeling lonely, but in ten years and retirement, who knows?"

Still, pessimism seems to grow as one gets older. "We find that gay men and women in their 50s may still be out there hoping to find someone," says Bill Matthews, who, as executive director of the Pride Senior Network (PSN), has heard it all about aging, relationships, and loneliness. "But many aren't interested in those their own age, and by the time they're into their 60s and 70s, most have given up."

### *Finding sex or finding love?*

Sex isn't necessarily the problem for older gay people. Ironically, it remains generally available regardless of age—depending on what you're willing to do for it and the rigidity of your standards—via Internet chat, ads, or if necessary, paid commerce. Yet, for some it's a lingering connection, if not addiction, to one's earlier sexual identity—numerous partners, recreational drugs, youthful bodies, etc.—that can actually be a barrier to forming more mature relationships with the no-longer nubile. "Ongoing preoccupation with younger sex objects is a major issue for many older gay men," says columnist and certified therapist Bob Diamond, who has a mostly gay clientele in retirement-oriented Palm Springs, California.

Hundreds of organizations (more at local than national levels) such as Senior Action in a Gay Environment, PSN, Prime Timers, Gay & Gray, and many others, cater to the needs and interests of older gay people on a variety of issues. "These resources certainly provide many venues for mature gay men and lesbians to meet," says Matthews. "But the actual occurrence of serious romance between two older gay men is always much rarer. Lesbian couples tend to do better and have much narrower age gaps." Diamond agrees. "Gay women seem to form quicker

*It ain't over til the fat lady sings.*
*But really, what qualifies as fat?*
*Or for that matter, a lady?*
*What happens when a kinda chubby*
*transsexual starts whistling?*
*Or a lady with a Schneider mustache*
*starts a hootin' and a hollerin'...then what?*
*See, they never tell you that part.*

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and stronger emotional attachments," he reports. "And older women definitely couple more often and successfully than men."

### *Legal gay marriage: would it help?*

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Yes, you're past your physical prime, but realize you've got experience, wisdom, and other talents.

After Canada legalized same-sex marriage last year, CNN videos of what appeared to be mostly older couples lined up for their ceremonies were encouraging. Whether that becomes common in a Bush-ified America that continues to pander to a panicky, homophobic religious right remains uncertain amidst the current fracas surrounding state and federal constitutional amendments prohibiting gay marriages. What's surprising is that the option of legal marriage seems less pressing among older couples, who prefer to deal with present reality. "I'm certainly in favor of gay marriage, although it's not something we necessarily need," says John. "I'm more concerned with legal ability to protect our interests right now. We've taken steps under contract laws such as wills and trusts, but we're still at a tax disadvantage that straight married people avoid. And it can be costly. When my first partner died, I lost all the insurance we had set up. The government took basically half of everything. No matter what you call yourself, you're not the 'surviving spouse.'"

John makes an important point. To some extent, contract law can indeed provide a smart resource to help ensure rights of survivorship and property. "We're registered in Sacramento as domestic partners," says Sandra. "We also have powers-of-attorney and wills—all we can to position us as equivalent to heterosexual spouses." But they have no plans to pursue an actual marriage if it becomes law, nor do Sylvia and Micki. "I believe our commitment to one another is well demonstrated," says Sylvia. "We've just bumped along not really worrying about how we're perceived by society at large. But at this point, there would be some benefit in filing joint taxes and entitlement to Social Security benefits." The two Tims had their own ceremony years ago and feel well protected. "If and when same-sex marriage is legalized we would renew our vows," says one Tim. "Meanwhile, what was said and done back then is enough for us."

### *Age plus HIV equals health issues*

Relationships are only one of many age-related issues. Often more pressing are ever-increasing health problems. For men, HIV status can complicate relationships as well, and being older doesn't mean you're through the woods yet. The Winter 2002 edition of *PSN Quarterly, The Networker*, notes, "The current population over 50 is more active…in every aspect…including their sex lives. Freer lifestyles can put them at risk. Each year more people are infected with HIV, regardless of age, gender, or sexual orientation." Indeed, the statistics are sobering. As of December 2000 the network estimated ten percent of gay men over 50 had HIV, and at least 25 percent of these are over 60.

"I'd prefer to find someone who is also positive," says Tom, diagnosed in 1985. "It's just so much easier. It's depressing when a guy's interest just evaporates when you tell him you have HIV. But if I met the right guy and he happened to be negative, that wouldn't be a deal-breaker." Jerry, who seroconverted more recently, acknowledges that it's a frustrating factor. "I think some in the younger gay community see us as just another aging poz guy, and even if they like older men, their interest goes to zero when they learn your status." Dave is even more emphatic. "You combine being 50-plus and HIV and forget it!" he says. "You're not even remotely considered by most guys. And I wouldn't consider a partner who wasn't also positive."

Despite the supposed "manageability" of HIV/AIDS, it still can be an issue for older gay men who lived through the worst of it and remained negative. "I watched so many friends die that it will always be a factor for me," says the minister. "I know guys are living longer, but I still think it would be hard for me to have a positive partner."

On the other hand, John had been HIV-positive for some time before meeting Steve, who is negative. "I'd encountered guys claiming to be negative when they're not," says Steve. "People lie. Then I met a kind and caring man who happened to have HIV. I don't want to become positive, but hopefully we're doing all the right things and it simply won't matter." John was admirably up-front about his status from the beginning. "We even visited my doctor together, who explained what we could and couldn't do," John recalls. "In the end, Steve told me it didn't matter and that he'd rather live with me than without me."

Eventually, of course, age and health worries overtake us all. Both Tims were treated for cancers unrelated to HIV, while John and Steve both lost their previous partners to the disease. And after four years with Sylvia, Micki suffered a brain aneurysm, followed by two debilitating strokes. "There was never any question of my leaving or abandoning her," says Sylvia philosophically. "Initially, some friends and family (on her side) thought I was completely nuts for sticking by her, given the severity of her disabilities. But to my mind I'd be a poor excuse for a human being if I were only in this relationship for the fair weather."

### *Deciding what you want*

"Age gracefully" is timelessly good advice for anyone. Many gay men in particular seem to have trouble shifting focus from younger, "hotter" men to those their own age. For some it's a lifelong propensity that may guarantee permanent solitude. Others desperately seek out any kind of relationship—or remain in bad ones—simply out of fear of aging and loneliness.

But it is possible, if more challenging, to find the right partner even when you're past *l'âge certain*. "At some point, a single older gay person has to accept some realities," advises Matthews. "Yes, you're past your physical prime, but realize you've got experience, wisdom and other talents. Decide if you really want to share your life, and if you can do so with someone around your own age. If you're still lusting after muscle boys most of the time, then you're probably not a good partner candidate."

So what keeps couples together? Love? Security? Fear of solitary senility? All of the above, of course, but it seems that if you can get past the loss of physical allure and keep a sense of humor, your chances improve vastly. "It may seem odd, but I love Micki more dearly now than when she was fit," says Sylvia. "Perhaps that's from nearly losing her. If I had packed up and ran off, she'd be in a nursing facility. But where would I have run? And how would I live with myself knowing I'd run? Yes, it's hard but it could be worse. We have our home and Micki is my responsibility. Were the tables turned, she would care for me—although I'd prefer that she not do the cooking." Grace indeed.

Above all, be ready for the unforeseen. "I've had a wonderful life," says John. "I have many friends, didn't fear loneliness or growing old, and was content. But now I'm more so, unexpectedly because of Steve. Sitting around dwelling on your age and solitude can only make it worse."

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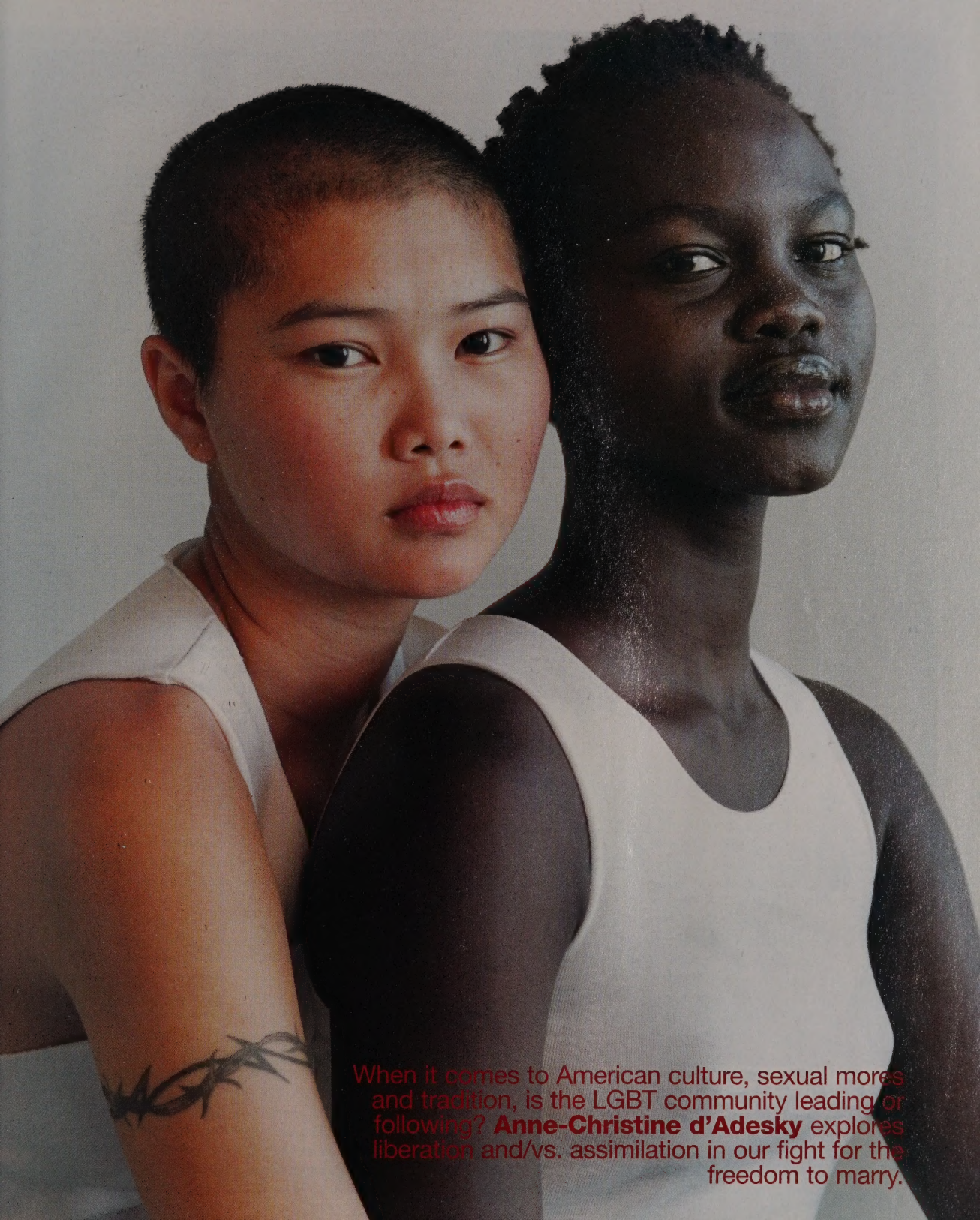
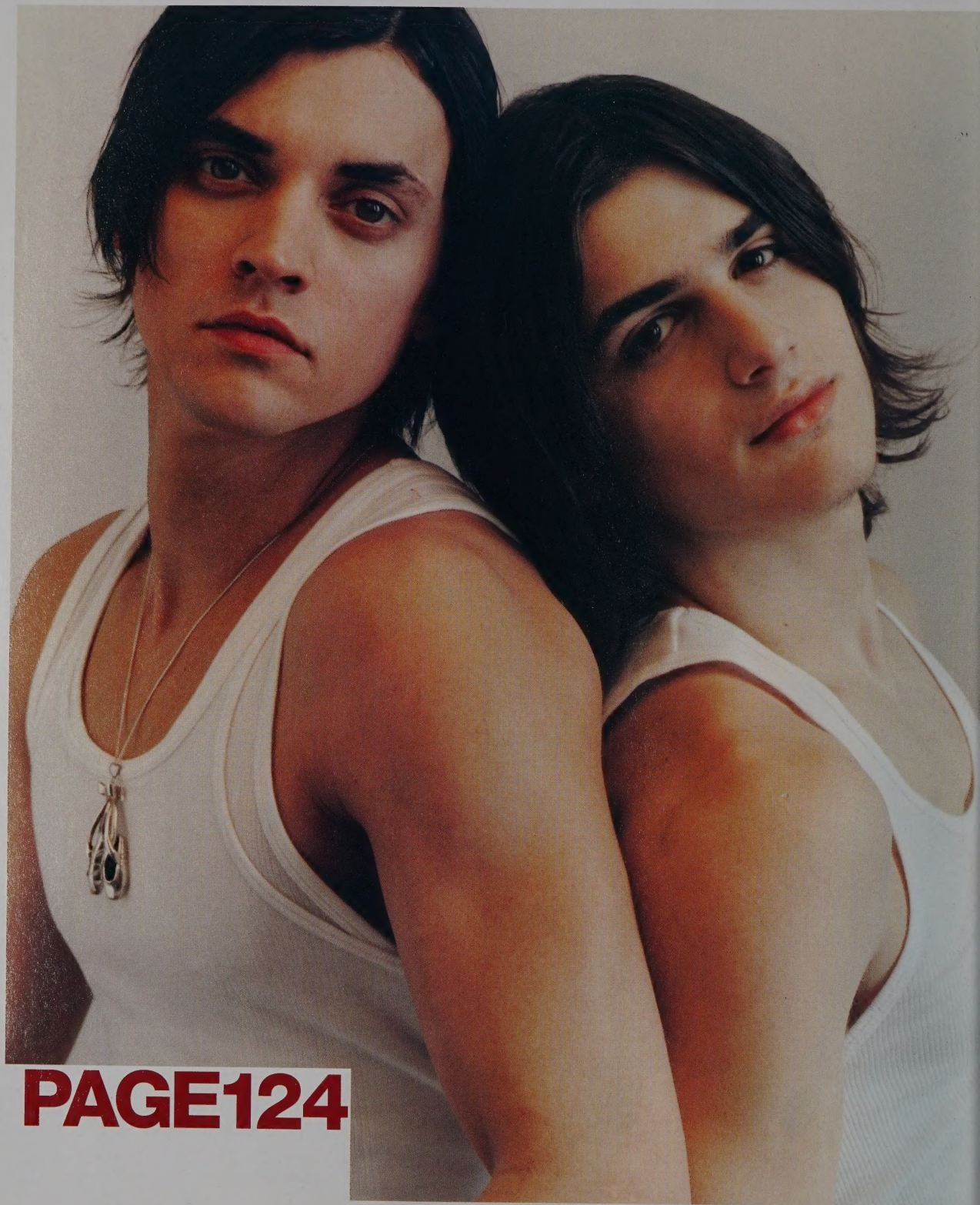
PHOTOGRAPHY: **MARK VELTMAN**
STYLIST: ROB ZANGARDI
MAKEUP: OLIVIA BASEMAN
HAIR: ROBERT SAUCEDO

# PRESERVING OUR UNION(S)



When it comes to American culture, sexual mores and tradition, is the LGBT community leading or following? **Anne-Christine d'Adesky** explores liberation and/vs. assimilation in our fight for the freedom to marry.



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February 12, 2004 will go down in the annals of history as a major step forward for gay and lesbian civil rights — and for American democracy. On that day, in a mass rush to the altar — actually the Rotunda of City Hall in San Francisco — hundreds of lesbian and gay couples were legally married by city officials. The marriages were a declaration of equality and a collective act of civil disobedience. By Tuesday the 17, over 2,600 were "spouses for life."

The watershed event occurred on National Freedom to Marry Day, which began in 1998, and was the fifth time gay couples had asked for marriage licenses from the SF clerk's office. The marriages were sanctioned by newly elected mayor Gavin Newsom, a married heterosexual, who declared, "not granting same-sex marriages is discriminatory and violates the California Constitution." That's the argument pro-gay marriage activists had been making to Newsom and his aides at City Hall for weeks, but even they were shocked when he made it happen.

"This is a revolutionary moment for those of us who have been fighting for marriage as a basic civil right for gay men and lesbians. It's history in the making. It's also a dream come true for me and for our family," claimed Ramona Gatto, 40, a nine-time world champion kickboxer. She got hitched on day two of the SF mass wedding to her longtime partner Arzu, 39, with their 15-year-old daughter Marina — also a strong pro-gay marriage advocate — among the celebratory witnesses. Just 24 hours earlier, a clerk had turned down their request for a marriage license. "Never in my wildest imagination did I think it would happen this way," added Gatto, still on cloud nine hours after the City Hall ceremony.

"As far as we're concerned, we are now legally married by the state, with all the rights and privileges of a heterosexual married couple." They hope marriage will allow Arzu, a German with "illegal alien" residency status, to stay in the U.S. "We've been worried they could force her to go back anytime. What would happen to our family?" asked Ramona.

"This is what we've been demanding: equality, no less and no more. No matter what happens from now on, no one can take this moment back. It's real. We're married."

The SF gay weddings mark the latest in a dizzying series of thrusts and parries by supporters and opponents of gay marriage. Even as couples rushed to City Hall, conservatives were pushing for an injunction to stop the weddings. They initially failed, but could prevail. "It will probably get struck down and ruled invalid, but it's gonna happen someday," said Max Sabo, 30, as he waited in line at City Hall on the eve of Valentine's Day to marry his honey, Brad Lytle, also 30. "We'll get the certificate and frame it and someday it will be valid." Added Lytle: "It's enormous. It's not just equal opportunity. It's overwhelming to see so many people who are here to get married because it's about us, all of us. It's about showing who we are and our love for one another."

With more battles looming, the issue of gay marriage has now become the rallying cry of equality for the mainstream gay and lesbian movement, and a contentious hot-button issue for presidential hopefuls. The fires of gay marriage were stoked last June, when Canada declared its intention to sanction same-sex unions. Although Ottowa's legislators have since wavered under fierce attack by conservatives, the issue galvanized activists here. Things got much hotter when Massachusetts declared last November that restricting marriage to heterosexuals violated its own constitution, setting off a constitutional showdown there. Meanwhile, 37 states and the federal government have laws outlawing same-sex marriage, and in February, Ohio's legislature gave final approval to one of the most sweeping bans on same-sex unions.

Newsom took action after hearing President Bush declare, in his State of the Union address, his plan to amend the U.S. Constitution and define marriage as strictly for heterosexuals. Overnight, the issue has been kicked into mainstream America's consciousness.

For many gays and lesbians, as well as bisexuals and transgendered individuals, the fight for the right to marry represents one of the last bastions of equal rights. But others in our community are less excited about rallying behind the banner of marriage, which they regard as a decaying institution that is failing many heterosexuals, or as a religious institution that is more a symbol of oppression than freedom. When it comes to mainstream culture and tradition, they wonder, are we leading or following?

Both, it seems. And in doing so, we're changing what is viewed as the norm.

## LIBERATION? ASSIMILATION?

"I think all the rules and definitions about relationships and sexuality are basically control mechanisms" said photographer David Steinberg, 59, a self-identified "queer, sex-positive kind of guy." David is suspicious of institutions like marriage: "If you tell people their relationships must be defined in a certain way, that they must be in legal marriages or must be monogamous, these are mechanisms of social control. Sex in general, sexual orientation in particular, and gender get set up as rigid poles, designed to make sure people are socially predictable in certain ways. Once you break out of being defined and controlled by those rules, people are free to be adventurous with their lives."

Steinberg supports the cause of gay marriage as a symbol of equality, but the people he knows are interested in pursuing other kinds of unions. They have a desire to transform our collective notion of what's possible in the broader arena of relationships and partnering, family and community, identity and sexuality. That spells non-monogamy and serial monogamy, casual sex or committed partnerships with polyamorous lovers, communal houses in which close friends and ex-lovers and children live as family — essentially the urban queer tribes — and every stripe in between. "I see a lot of people being creative in their self-definition and sexuality," said Steinberg. "Once you get creative in one aspect of your life, you're going to get creative in other aspects of your life as well." A fine-art photographer, he is working on a photo project depicting the sexuality of individuals in long-term relationships. "You wouldn't believe the diversity that's out there," he observes.

None of this is exactly new for gays and lesbians; after all, we've always had to reinvent the rules and define the spaces we inhabit. But those who agree with Steinberg feel such creative ▶

**"I think marriage is a totally legitimate issue, but I don't have a personal desire to have that kind of marriage"**

exploration is an important part of the promise of liberation, and is getting dropped on the road to assimilation. "I think it's always true of marginalized and stigmatized communities that there is a desire to have some trappings of normalcy and acceptance," he said. "I think 50 percent of the people in this country, gays included, are running as fast as they can into these traditional notions because they are panicked by change. But the other 50 percent are moving just as rapidly away from that."

Cliff Leonardi and Scott Stumbo are the gay poster boys — or actually poster dads — of their Castro neighborhood in SF, and role models for their heterosexual friends as well. They don't seem panicked about change, but they're not exactly running toward marriage either. In a quieter way, they've rocked the mainstream boat and the gay male boat by being two young men who knew they wanted children, something viewed as radical years back. "We both look pretty conservative, and our kids go to a hippie groovy school," said Scott, 36, who works as an AIDS-prevention researcher. "We laugh because we're the only gay dads there, but we might as well be bankers compared to these dads who have long hair and are total hippies."

It's been an interesting road for the duo. They live together in a committed long-term relationship and are registered as domestic partners. They had a big commitment ceremony at the three-year mark of their relationship, exchanging their own vows in front of 100 friends and family. Four years ago, they adopted three children. Their single straight friends envy their relationship, but the dad part alienates some of their gay male friends. "It's not nearly as bad as it was ten years ago," said Scott. "It was like: 'Why would you want to do that?' They'd say, 'We fought long and hard so that we don't have to have children or look like other people.' I say, 'That's fine, don't do it, it's not for everyone.'"

The couple has inspired at least a dozen gay couples to adopt. But marriage isn't as much of a goal. "I come from an anti–religious establishment perspective," Scott explained. "I think marriage is a totally legitimate issue, but I don't have a personal desire to have that kind of marriage." He does think about the tax benefits, but feels that not being married is smarter at the moment, since the two are thinking of buying a second home. "There are things like health care and visitation rights that come with being married that I expect and want," he added. "So it's on our minds, but I feel like we've got what we need."

What really mattered was having children. Here, the commitment ceremony pictures helped convince the adoption agency social worker that he and Cliff were in a serious, stable relationship. "It showed her we were committed in a way she could understand," he explained. "It legitimized it to her and made a huge difference."

Carol Queen and Robert Lawrence aren't thinking about having children, so that kind of legitimacy isn't important to them. Like David Steinberg, they're less interested in marriage and more interested in passionate explorations of sexual identity, gender and desire. And like Scott Stumbo, there are sides of their lives that throw off both mainstream America and the gay mainstream. At 46, Queen is a well-known Bay Area writer on sexuality and gender, and the staff sexologist at Good Vibrations, a cooperatively owned sex toy store. She and Lawrence, also a sex educator, are creating a center for sex and culture in SF. They met 15 years ago and live together; they also sleep together, sleep with other people together, and had a committed threesome for a while in there.

"Time flies when you're having fun," said Queen, charting their relationship(s). A self-identified "pansexual," she met Lawrence when she was still identified as lesbian, and he was a gay man who sometimes slept with women. "Robert was my pansexual big faggy guy who had sex with girls dream-come-true. I was a sneaky lesbian who was borrowing fag porn and having bad fantasies," recalled Queen fondly.

"I was a sneaky little kid who came out in the '60s and '70s with the other boys in my neighborhood and was one of the queers in town," Lawrence added. He was bisexual and joined the Army, then got married. He met Queen at one of the nation's first safer-sex events — "a Jack and Jill-off party, thrown by an organization called Mother Goose," Lawrence laughed. "I was cruising the men she was with and we ended up kissing. That kiss has lasted 15 years."

## TRANSFORMATIONS

They aren't married and don't plan on it. However, as a man and woman in a long-term relationship they could — and even some of their gay friends suggest they should — take advantage of this heterosexual perq. But they're queer and they don't consider themselves in a straight relationship. They won't marry on principal, too, because gays can't. "I think the 'leading or following?' question is pretty profound, and I agree with you that it's both," said Queen. "When we're talking about marriage, clearly there are a lot of instrumental things that add up to people's idea of equality, like financial access, access to being one's intimate other in cases of disaster, or custody issues… all the things that rightly the queer community talks about." For these reasons, they concur that marriage is a fight for equal rights.

"The Right has chosen to draw their strongest line on this, which makes people in the queer community who might not see this as their strongest objective feel like they have to act or react in pro-gay marriage fashion," she continued. " If the culture is homophobic and insists on stating that marriage means male and female, then same-sex marriage is radical even when it's not. That's one of the places we get caught up. But it's not my biggest issue, because I read Emma Goldman when I was 12." As a feminist, she explained, "I think marriage is a form of cultural bondage on one level, of forcing everyone into pair bonding and into monogamy. I go for other forms of bondage," she added, smiling. On a more serious note, she explained, "The way pairing is presented to us is that an individual, especially a single woman, is suspect in almost every way. That's so problematic. My feeling is, 'let's deconstruct that.'"

Like Steinberg, the sex-positive camp is suspicious of any gay agenda that touts coupledom and marriage as the socially desirable social unit, one equated with maturity and stability — especially given mainstream society's traditional dismissal of homosexuality as an incomplete or immature form of love and desire compared with heterosexuality.

"I think there's an assumption in many quarters of the queer community that if we can get [gay marriage] we'll prove to everyone how ▶

# Lead counsel on the San Francisco marriage case

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much like them we are, and it will stabilize our lives, which is a variant of 'mature,' but not exactly the same," said Queen. As a cultural critic, she looks at the divorce rate in America, and worries that gays and lesbians are being lured by a romantic myth.

"I remind people that a vote for gay marriage is a vote for gay divorce," said Queen. "It doesn't change what happens in a relationship. If you can't wake up in the morning and look at the person you're with and say, 'I'm committed to this person, I love this person, I'm gonna care for this person,' then why do you want to marry them? It doesn't put into your life what isn't there."

Yet even with divorce, gays may transform the institution. "You can absolutely count on the fact that the queer community will set a higher standard for what divorce can be — good and bad," said Lawrence. "As they come apart, they will still be lovers and friends. I think the structure will be that our ex's will either never be talked to again, or will be very close to us. It will be different, because we are different."

## BEYOND THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

What he's describing — a community of ex-lovers — is already a familiar institution among lesbians and gay men. By necessity and choice, we often create alternative families to the heterosexual norm. By doing so, we've influenced the mainstream, which has become more like us. Popular television shows like *Friends* and *Seinfeld* reflect the lifestyle of 30-something urban "metrosexuals" who create family with their friends, even after they couple off and marry.

In his 2003 book *Urban Tribe,* Ethan Watters argues that these loose-knit communities are more than a demographic, and reflect a generational embrace of social models different from the stereotypical nuclear family. Individuals prefer to live more communally, and view close friendships as the thread of consistency, emotional support and stability in their lives. Romance and marriage are a more problematic ideal, and not a lifelong guarantee of happiness. Here, the lines separating gays and straights are blurring, just as with sexual identity and gender.

Sasha Cagen, author of a new book on this growing trend, has coined the slogan "quirkyalone" to describe a segment of society that would rather hang with friends than compulsively date in order to avoid loneliness. The new mantra is staying true to yourself, avoiding "the tyranny of coupledom" as Cagen puts it, and adopting a view of the individual as the stable social unit. Lovers can be "quirky together" without merging. And a single"quirkyslut" can enjoy some frisky dating.

## S/HE

Meet Jess Socket, 27. Jess belongs to a gender-fluid, polyamorous urban tribe in Oakland, in which people of different ages and backgrounds are drawn together by an interest in anarchism and lefty politics. Socket prefers the pronoun s/he, and is tight with the Radical Faeries, a historically gay male movement that is pro-pagan and communally oriented. Socket's community includes Gay Shame, a group formed as a playful antidote to Gay Pride, which they regard as having become too commercial and mainstream. For Socket, the Holy Grail isn't marriage, it's personal freedom and a desire to maintain self-care within sexual relationship*s* — plural. "I'm giving up having someone wrapped around my little finger, needing a guarantee they're gonna be there. But I'm embracing the idea that as long as we're working on our stuff, we're gonna be there for each other." Socket points to strong, committed relationships — just not traditional ones.

That's an understatement. Socket's relationships would probably give George W. and the Christian Right a right scare, though they fit neatly into the '60s' tradition of sexual and social exploration. She's had a partner for many years and other lovers as well, all of whom know about each other. "The scheduling can be tricky; the key is good communication."

That might sound like a recipe for bad drama to others, but not to her. "It does take a lot of work, but it's right for me," she said. "We have really deep relationships and we nurture each other."

Socket comes from a Jewish family, and says they are supportive. "My parents have worked really hard to meet me where I am. Two years ago they really wanted me to come down for Thanksgiving and said, 'You can bring anyone you want.' So I brought my five loves and a cat. It was perfect."

Socket has a heterosexual sister who's getting married, and supports her sister's choice. She knows it makes her parents happy, too. "But if I started talking about marriage, I think they'd be worried," s/he laughs. "They'd say, 'Are you okay?' They know me."

## NO TURNING BACK

An issue that resonates with both mainstream and more radical gays is the need for spiritual and sacred rituals that provide a transcendent element to our lives and relationships, something people associate with marriage and weddings. "I think people should create their own rituals and celebrations as much as they can," said Socket. She borrows from Judaism to create rituals around events important to her loved ones, such as transgendered friends undergoing a gender-identity transition or adopting new names. "I tend to create rituals around that, to say, 'this is a place for you and your new person.'" Such rituals celebrate and affirm the bonds between individuals and communities.

Back across the Bay, Ramona Gatto understands that someone like Jess Socket might not be excited about getting married at City Hall. But she says the common thread uniting us is freedom of choice and equality. "The country is saying that our family isn't valued as much as others'… If another family doesn't want to be defined by [marriage], that would be their choice. But they should have an option. Until we do, we aren't equal."

She's ready for the Constitutional showdown, too. "This is not different from other civil rights issues. The more that you get a president saying 'I want to add discrimination into the Constitution,' the more you're gonna have people talking and listening. With that comes awareness, so change is inevitable. Hey, look — it's happening. There's no turning back."

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Hair **John Ruidant**

BLACK AND PINK '80'S DRESS **VINTAGE**
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SHOES **VINTAGE**

TUXEDO **VINTAGE**
TUXEDO SHIRT BY **YOMEDA YU**

WU SHU PANT **AT BLT**
BLACK TANK TOP BY **CALVIN KLEIN**
WHITE SNEAKER **AT BLT**

BLACK STRAPLESS BATHING SUIT WITH RAINBOW **VINTAGE**
BLACK WITH WHITE STRIPE STAY UP BY **WOLFORD**

LACK LEATHER SLEEVELESS TOP AND
LACK LEATHER PLEATED SKIRT **VINTAGE**
ED TIGHTS **VALENTINO**
HITE LEATHER AND SUEDE BOOTS **VINTAGE**

Photos, far left: Geoff Manasse. www.rpsp.com

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# InterPride

### **Vive la Différence*

**Vive from the French verb to live. Vive la Différence; akin to Let Us Celebrate Our Differences.*

This year's international Pride theme, Vive la Différence truly reflects what most Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Events have become: a celebratory gathering in homage of the diversity of our communities. We gather to march, to remember, to acknowledge, to encourage, to party, to perform, to create amazing public spectacles, to put all our resources in order and to reflect the state of our vibrant communities. We invite all to participate, to partake, to see, to clap, to laugh, to cheer and to cry. We invite all to support the ongoing struggle against bigotry. We continue to demand that our struggles be recognized as a worldwide human rights issue.

### *The Amazing LGBT Pride Event*

- It is still amazing how individuals toil, year after year, to make Pride celebrations exist.
- It is still amazing to be young, to discover ones gayness and to participate for the first time in a Pride event.
- It is still amazing to be a gay senior and to walk for the first time in a Pride Parade.
- It is still amazing to hold a sign and to wear a T-shirt that states that I am proud of my gay child.
- It is not amazing that after 35 years we still get asked the reason for Pride celebrations.

### *The Making of a Gay Pride Event*

There are over 200 annual public, outdoor, on-the-street, Pride events around the world. Pride events have become an inherent part of LGBT communities. They embody public recognition and acknowledgement of community. They are the rallying force and the standard bearers of a Human Rights struggle. They are a continual public proof of our growth and existence.

Pride events only exist through the will, the sweat and the toil of a gathering of minds. A sole person can never put on a Pride event. It is a collective effort, whether one organizes, performs, cleans, lugs, builds, polices or just simply watches. Even if one is alone in initially steering such an event, ultimately many gather to work together.

The main difficulty that we, Pride celebrations, most often encounter is in our attempt to define ourselves, since a Pride celebration has no unique goal but a multitude of goals — which could encompass: a cause, a performance aspect and a very on-the-street public demonstration such as a parade. Through and in Pride events, communities often touch on every aspect of communal existence, such as health, social, artistic and religious issues. Prides have also become non-profit businesses that generate money into and around both the business and social economies of our respective cities.

### *35 Years and Beyond*

The New York Stonewall Riots of 1969 are generally thought of as being the origin of the present Pride Celebrations around the world. Since then, some LGBT communities have achieved equality, while some are still in hiding for fear of their lives. On the North American front, Canada is heading towards full recognition and equality in the granting of the right to marriage in civil courts, while the United States is contemplating granting discrimination in its Constitution, the very document that ensures rights to most individuals. And the Mexican LGBT Community is still actively struggling against accepted, ingrained macho homophobic attacks. But it seems the LGBT communities have, in all forms of media, fully come out of the closet. Basically put, our existence is known and talked about. Never again to be denied.

The challenge for North American Prides is to constantly move with the times, to grow as community celebratory events, to welcome positive criticism that aims to encourage growth, to network in order to fight negative criticism that would want our demise, to pass on the flame to the up and coming generations of LGBT youth and to guarantee long life to these extraordinary events.

Equal rights can be achieved.

We must however continuously and forever fight to eradicate homophobia.

In Pride

**Russell Murphy, Suzanne Girard**

*Co-presidents InterPride*

InterPride
Cafe

# ndar

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Indianapolis, IN, USA | Feb 12 | Fargo-Moorhead, ND, USA | Jun 4-6 |
| Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa | Feb 20-29 | Kansas City, KS, USA | Jun 4-6 |
| Fort Lauderdale, FL, USA | Mar 13-14 | Bangor, ME, USA | Jun 4-8 |
| Montreal, Quebec, Canada | Mar 20 | Birmingham, AL, USA | Jun 4-13 |
| Lake Worth, FL, USA | Mar 27-28 | Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany | Jun 4-13 |
| Phoenix, AZ, USA | Apr 3 | Austin, TX, USA | Jun 5 |
| Charlotte, NC, USA | Apr 30 - May 2 | Cedar Rapids, IA, USA | Jun 5 |
| Warsaw, Poland | May 1-3 | New Haven, CT, USA | Jun 5 |
| Las Vegas, NV, USA | May 12-15 | Duesseldorf, NRW, Germany | Jun 5-6 |
| Columbia, SC, USA | May 14-16 | Milwaukee, WI, USA | Jun 5-6 |
| Knoxville, TN, USA | May 21-23 | Fort Worth, TX, USA | Jun 5-12 |
| Brussels, Belgium | May 22 - Jan 1 | Boise, ID, USA | Jun 5-13 |
| Long Beach, CA, USA | May 22-23 | Asbury Park, NJ, USA | Jun 6 |
| Puebla, Puebla, Mexico | May 29 | Detroit, MI, USA | Jun- 6 |
| Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil | May 30 - Jun 28 | Calgary, Alberta, Canada | Jun 6-12 |
| Providence, RI, USA | Jun 1-19 | Washington, D.C. , DC, USA | Jun 6-13 |
| Chicago, IL, USA | Jun 1-30 | Tijuana, Baja California Norte, Mexico | Jun 10-12 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Albuquerque, NM, USA | Jun 11-12 |
| Arcata, CA, USA | Jun 11-13 |
| Flagstaff, AZ, USA | Jun 11-13 |
| Springfield, MO, USA | Jun 11-13 |
| Houston, TX, USA | Jun 11-27 |
| Dallas, TX, USA | Jun 12 |
| Erie, PA, USA | Jun 12 |
| Arcata, CA, USA | Jun 12-13 |
| Indianapolis, IN, USA | Jun 12-13 |
| San Jose, CA, USA | Jun 12-13 |
| Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, CANADA | Jun 12-19 |
| Huntington - Long Island, NY, USA | Jun 13 |
| Lansing, MI, USA | Jun 13 |
| Philadelphia, PA, USA | Jun 13 |
| Portland, ME, USA | Jun 13-20 |
| Topeka, KS, USA | Jun 14-19 |
| Minneapolis, MN, USA | Jun 16-27 |
| Fort Wayne, IN, USA | Jun 18-19 |
| Oldenburg, Lower-Saxony, GERMANY | Jun 18-19 |
| Los Angeles / West Hollywood, CA, USA | Jun 18-20 |
| Omaha, NE, USA | Jun 18-20 |
| Edmonton, Alberta, CANADA | Jun 18-27 |
| Guadalajara, Jalisco, MEXICO | Jun 18 - Jul 3 |
| Cleveland, OH, USA | Jun 19 |
| San Antonio, TX, USA | Jun 19 |
| SYRACUSE, NY, USA | Jun 19 |
| Baltimore, MD, USA | Jun 19-20 |
| Portland , OR, USA | Jun 19-20 |
| Allentown, PA, USA | Jun 20 |
| Wilton Manors/Fort Lauderdale, FL, USA | Jun 20 |
| New York City, NY, USA | Jun 20-27 |
| New York City, NY, USA | Jun 20-27 |
| Toronto, Ontario, CANADA | Jun 21-27 |
| Atlanta, GA, USA | Jun 25-27 |
| Berlin, GERMANY | Jun 26 |
| Manila, Metro Manila, PHILIPPINES | Jun 26 |
| St. Petersburg, FL, USA | Jun 26 |
| Vienna, Vienna, AUSTRIA | Jun 26 |
| Lisboa, Lisboa, PORTUGAL | Jun 26-27 |
| San Francisco, CA, USA | Jun 26-27 |
| Seattle, WA, USA | Jun 26-27 |
| Guadalajara, Jalisco, MEXICO | Jun 26 - Jul 3 |
| Helsinki, FINLAND | Jun 28 - Jul 4 |
| Budapest, Budapest, HUNGARY | Jul 1 - 4 |
| Rome, Italy, ITALY | Jul 1-10 |
| London , Ontario, CANADA | Jul 2-17 |
| Porto, PORTUGAL | Jul 3 |
| Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA | Jul 5-11 |
| Leeds, West Yorkshire, UK | Jul 16-18 |
| Cape Cod, MA, USA | Jul 17 |
| Lindau, Bodensee, GERMANY | Jul 17 |
| Brunswick, Lower-Saxony, GERMANY | Jul 23-24 |
| Munich, Bavaria, GERMANY | Jul 23-25 |
| Montreal, Quebec, CANADA | Jul 26 - Aug 1 |
| Stockholm, SWEDEN | Jul 28 - Aug |
| San Diego, CA, USA | Jul 30 - Aug 1 |
| Cork, Cork, IRELAND | Jul 30 - Aug 2 |
| Harrisburg, PA, USA | Jul 31 |
| Jacksonviille, FL, USA | Jul 31 - Aug 8 |
| Reykjavik, ICELAND | Aug 6 - Aug 7 |
| Los Angeles, CA, USA | Aug 7 |
| Copenhagen, Copenhagen, DENMARK | Aug 14-15 |
| San Diego, CA, USA | Aug 21 |
| Cornwall, Ontario, CANADA | Sep 3-5 |
| Hartford, CT, USA | Sep 18 |
| Hartford, CT, USA | Sep 18 |
| Page / Lake Powell, AZ, USA | Sep 18-19 |
| Savannah , GA, USA | Sep 18-19 |
| Springfield, MA, USA | Sep 19 |
| Trenton, NJ, USA | Sep 19 |
| Montevideo, URUGUAY | Sep 24 |
| Santa Barbara, CA, USA | Sep 24-26 |
| Durham , NC, USA | Oct 2-3 |
| Raleigh, NC, USA | Oct 2-3 |
| Gainesville, FL, USA | Oct 8-17 |
| Tucson, AZ, USA | Oct 9 |
| Philadelphia, PA, USA | Oct 10 |
| Los Angeles (Studio City), CA, USA | Oct 16-17 |
| Palm Springs, CA, USA | Nov 6-7 |
| Lake Havasu City, AZ, USA | Nov 12-14 |

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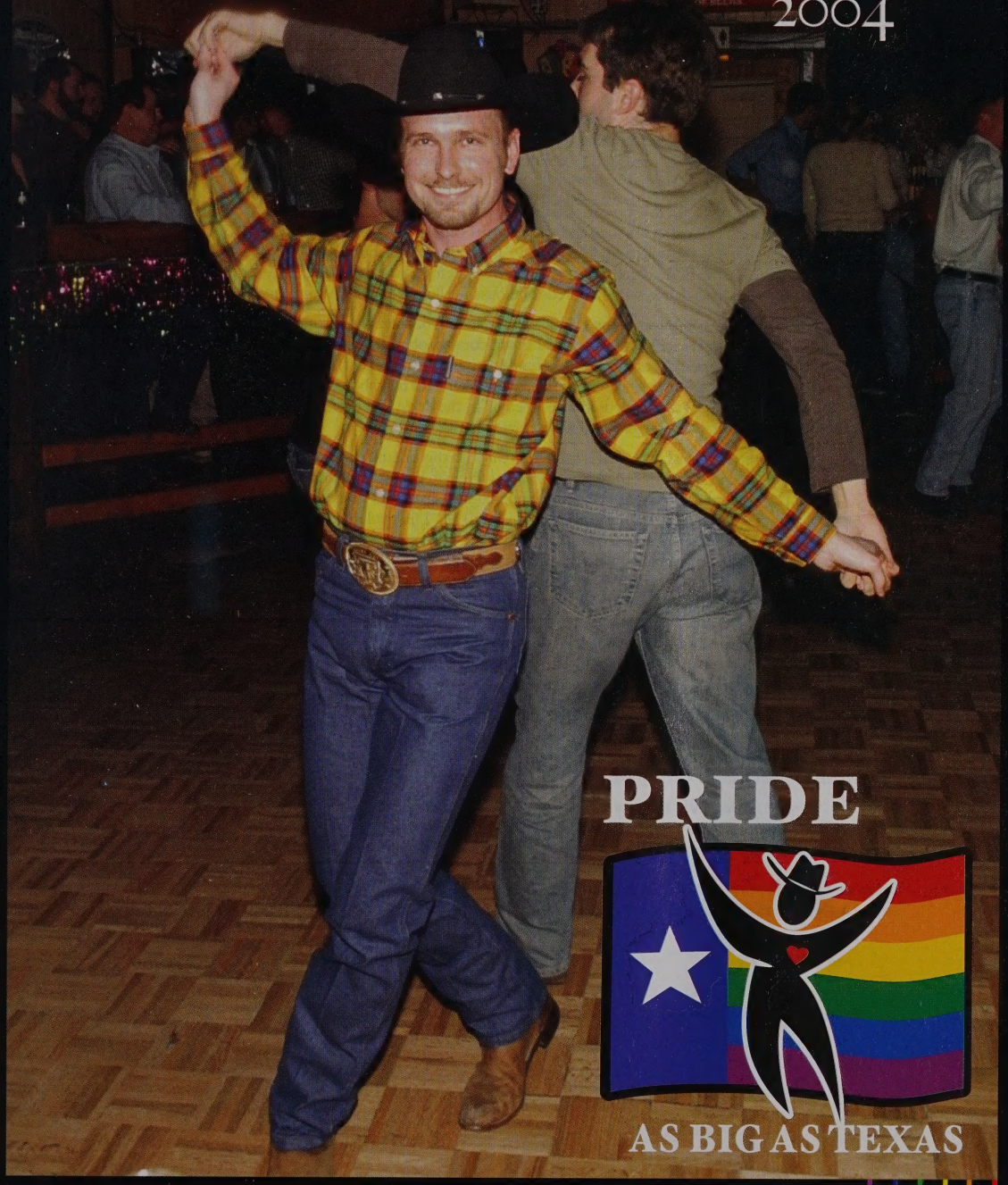
# Houston

2004



PRIDE

AS BIG AS TEXAS

# Welcome to Houston's 2004 Pride Celebration!

The Pride Committee of Houston has been very busy planning and organizing events, raising funds, recruiting and training volunteers and working with the many people and organizations that are a part of our GLBT community to produce a top-notch celebration for you to enjoy.

It will be hard to top 2003. Last year, we hosted 25 days of events to coincide with our 25th anniversary. Films, workshops and social events brought us together to learn, discuss and celebrate. We had the milestone Lawrence v. Texas Supreme Court decision announced just two days before the Pride Parade. With perfect weather for Houston in June, at least the parade boasted record attendance, with hundreds of thousands lining up along Westheimer.

But the volunteers of the Pride Committee are not content to let it end there. We still have work to do. We still have discrimination in our schools and workplaces. Our unions are not legally recognized. Funding is limited (and sometimes non-existent) for our health, legal and social issues. We still have a need to be out and visible to our neighbors, co-workers, family and friends. We hope this year's celebration, capped off by the Pride Parade, can create an avenue for everyone to participate and make a difference in their own special way.

On a personal note, this is my tenth year with this organization and my second year as President. It has been a pleasure to get to know Houston's GLBT community. Since I first joined, this organization has been growing and building steadily to be a popular, fun annual celebration that is inclusive, enjoyable and responsive to all. I first volunteered after three years of watching the Pride Parade and consistently having a great time. In 1993, I was sitting on the curb, drinking a beer, hanging with my friends and watching a fantastic float pass. I turned to one of my friends and asked, "Who organizes this parade every year, anyway?" A little research and a phone call later, I was sitting in a Pride Committee meeting. I volunteered and have never looked back. I learned this organization is so much more than just the Pride Parade. It's a great way to network, be involved, learn about our community, make a difference, and feel good about making Houston better for us all. If you have ever wondered how this event happens year after year, call or e-mail us. You won't regret it!

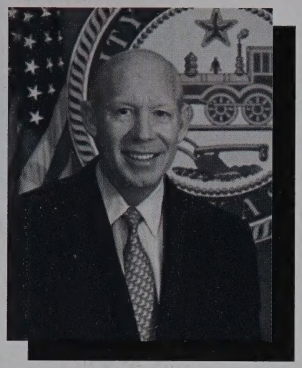
Thanks also for picking up this Pride.04 Magazine! Now in our fourth year, we hope you will think of this annual magazine as our community yearbook to feature the many events, leaders, issues and trends that make up the diverse gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community of Houston and beyond.

I always say there is something for everyone during our annual Pride Celebration. Whether you are marching proudly in the parade, attending one of our many workshops, or just reading this magazine . . . Welcome! This is YOUR celebration. Enjoy it. Be a part of it.

Nicolas Brines

Nicolas J Brines

President
Pride Committee of Houston



Greetings,

As mayor of the City of Houston, I am pleased to extend my warm greetings to all participating in various activities to be held during the annual Pride Celebration. I would also like to welcome the many guests who will be attending these events from across the state.

Houston historically has offered an array of activities, organizations and services that are reflective of its diversity, and this celebration continues in that tradition.

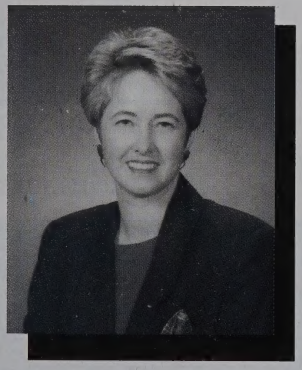
The strengths of this great city are in the men and women who make up our diverse cultural richness.

Your work shows that Houston is a city of communities, and we all strive to make this a better place to live and work. I look forward to working with you on the issues that are important to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community, and all Houstonians.

Best wishes for a successful and memorable Pride Celebration.

Sincerely,

Bill White
Mayor



Dear friends,

Greetings from the Houston City Controller's Office! Yes, that's right! I am now the second highest elected city official in Houston.

Congratulations on what I am sure will be another grand parade. All of you work so tirelessly to make this a classy and exciting event. I want to personally say thank you.

I also want to extend a heartfelt thank you for the ongoing support I receive from the GLBT community. Just look at how far we have come!

Sincerely,

Annise D. Parker
City Controller

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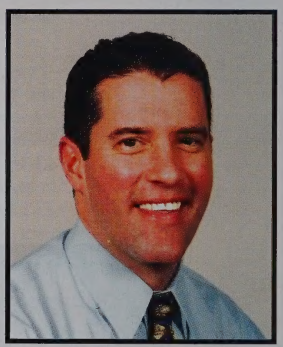

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Insert Cover Photo by Yvonne K. Feece: Two Dancers Two Step at the Brazos River Bottom
Pride as Big as Texas logo by Stef Silvano

# HOUSTON

## A space of infinite possibilities

In 1836, two brothers from New York, Augustus and John Allen, navigated north from Galveston Bay to Buffalo Bayou. They were land speculators and saw the area as a perfect place for a community to thrive. Houston was born. Today, SpaceCity represents all that is typically Texas – and much, much more. Houston has grown to more than four million people; the fourth largest city in the U.S. Houstonians speak more than 90 languages, creating an exciting, diverse environment for all people to live, work, play and visit. The sights are remarkable and each area of the city offers visitors something different. Houston's downtown is a great place for entertainment. The resurgence of development and energy downtown has brought many people to the area for dining, entertainment and much more. The new Hilton Americas-Houston Hotel adds 1,200 guestrooms to downtown Houston. Bayou Place, an entertainment complex, offers the multi-screen Angelika Film Center & Café, several excellent restaurants and clubs including Hard Rock Café, a live-music venue, Slick Willie's for billiards and dance clubs like BAR Houston and Have a Nice Day Café. Additionally, there are dozens more restaurants and nightspots for any taste. The Downtown Entertainment District, The Main Event is downtown Houston's newest "place to be." Beautiful fountains and the new light rail train which takes riders from downtown to Reliant Park make this district a hub of activity and fun. Dining, dancing and great people-watching are The Main Event.

**Each area of the city offers visitors something different**

Downtown is also the place for sports fans. The Houston Astros' home, Minute Maid Park, is the ticket for baseball fans every season. The park and souvenir shop is open year-round for memorabilia and tours. The recently opened Toyota Center is the shiny new home of the Houston Rockets, Comets and Aeros. It's also the site of concerts and special performances. For star-studded performances, the Theater District is ready to dazzle you. Opera, ballet, performing arts and the symphony are the options in this multi-block downtown district. Just south of downtown, Reliant Park is the site of many major events and conventions. Reliant Stadium is the 69,500-seat retractable-roof home of the NFL Texans and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo — the world's largest rodeo. Next to the stadium is the world's first domed stadium, the Reliant Astrodome. Reliant Center encompasses more than 700,000 square feet of state-of-the-art space, which can host events, meetings and trade shows of any size and scope. Reliant Park is also neighbor to one of the city's largest attractions — Six Flags AstroWorld and WaterWorld. The theme parks draw millions of visitors annually. But AstroWorld and

Above: An ongoing exhibit at the Menil Collection Opposite: The Houston city skyline at dusk



PRIDEHOUSTON.ORG

Bayou Place has become a main draw for tourists and locals alike

WaterWorld share the spotlight with several other major attractions. Splashtown is the biggest water park in Texas and it offers hours of watery fun in the summer months. At Space Center Houston, visitors can explore the past, present and future of manned space flight, land the space shuttle or touch a moon rock. The great outdoors is also a big perk in Houston. The Houston Zoo is found in scenic Hermann Park. Centrally located, the park offers a golf course, two beautiful gardens, the Japanese Tea Gardens and the Houston Garden Center, and free outdoor performances at Miller Outdoor Theatre. Additionally, find hike and bike trails and beautiful and challenging golf courses around the city to test your skill and endurance. The Museum District, within walking distance of Hermann Park, gives visitors a taste of Houston's impressive cultural scene. The city is home to more than 500 cultural, visual, and performing arts organizations, including The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Houston Museum of Natural Science, The Children's Museum of Houston, the Menil Collection and the Contemporary Arts Museum. Other additions include the Holocaust Museum Houston, the John P. McGovern Museum of Health & Medical Science and the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft. For shopaholics, SpaceCity has gained a reputation as one of the world's greatest retail centers. Its most well-known site is The Galleria, a collection of hotels, restaurants and more than 300 retail stores all centered around a giant indoor ice skating rink.

Houston also boasts the world's largest medical center — The Texas Medical Center. Medicine is a growing economic force here, employing more than 61,000 people and comprising 42 institutions, with an economic impact of more than $13 billion. And don't forget, Houston is a coastal city. Just minutes from the cool breezes of the Gulf Coast, you can dine on great seafood, listen to live music or ride a Ferris wheel on the Kemah Boardwalk. Enjoy the sand and surf of Galveston Island and its beautiful historic homes and the fun of Moody Gardens. And in Clear Lake, take in the smooth sailing of dozens of watercraft cruising along the Gulf waters. With major airports, Houston boasts one of the nation's premier international gateways, linking the region to more than 150 destinations, including some 50 international points in Mexico, Central and South America, Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, Canada and Africa. Host of Super Bowl XXXVIII, the All-Star Baseball Game, Tennis Master's Cup and the 2011 NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four, Houston will be the site of great fun and activity. Houston is a space of infinite possibilities. As a top convention and tourism destination you'll enjoy the very best hotels, convention facilities, sports, entertainment, dining, outdoor recreation and attractions. The Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau and its partners, Continental Airlines and HP, Houston encourage you to make Houston your choice for business or pleasure. For more information on Houston attractions, log on to www.visithoustontexas.com or call 1-800-4HOUSTON. ▼

# A Day in the Life of . . .

## Naomi Toledo - Lonestar Clothing Company

Naomi Toledo matriculated Rice University in '98. A Christian, Toledo was told by members of Intervarsity Christian Fellowship that as a lesbian she could attend meetings but not hold any kind of leadership position. Confounded by the group's limited acceptance, Toledo decided to form a group of her own, Queer Christians. "I felt if I can't be myself and worship God the way I like to, I'm going to start my own thing."

In the time it lasted, Queer Christians affected some lives and was met with some resistance. Posters were sometimes found torn down and thrown away. "A friend told me, 'I walked by the hallway with your Queer Christians flyer and this dude walks past it and he's like, 'You heard of that group? Weird Christians.'" There were visits from Christians who were suspicious of gays, gays who were suspicious of Christians, and those who were just plain curious. "I think in the long run it did open up some eyes."

Now a graduate, Toledo has become an entrepreneur in the t-shirt business. "I once saw a Chicana girl at Rice wearing a shirt that read 'Little Brown Girl.' I thought, 'Why can't I do that?'"

Toledo is building a stock of queer designs, Chicano pride designs, and others. "I'll do just about anything unless it's offensive to me, homophobic, racist, or just maligning of any group. I may be broke but I'm not that broke."

One of the funnier custom design requests Toledo has received is for local black comedian Daryl Wright who wants shirts to sell after his shows. The image is of his face over a Stars and Bars Dixie flag with the caption, "What, me mad? They lost."

www.lonestarclothingcompany.com
info@lonestarclothingcompany.com

—ED

## Rev. Dwayne Johnson - Pastor, Metropolitan Community Church

Born in Lubbock, Reverend Dwayne Johnson was often asked if he was going to follow in his father's footsteps and become a minister. "I thought that was the last thing I would want to do." But in his senior year at MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe, Kansas, he had a change of heart and decided to choose a calling where he could affect people in deep and meaningful ways. He has. "A young woman came to talk to me," recalls Johnson. "She said, 'I'm here to say thank you.' On a whim, she decided to come and worship with us and found it to be a transforming experience, pointing her life in a whole new direction. She's been coming ever since."

To those who define the GLBT community as opprobrium, saying God hates gays or even quoting scripture (such as 1 Cor 6:9) to that effect, Johnson offers this insight. "The main thing is the Bible really doesn't address gay-straight issues. The references are misconstrued, referring to some of the cultural traditions at that time. It had nothing to do with GLBT love relationships. Of course Christ doesn't say anything about it at all. I encourage people to read the Bible as a book that is descriptive as opposed to proscriptive. If you read it through the lens of a loving God, you're not going to find that hateful context."

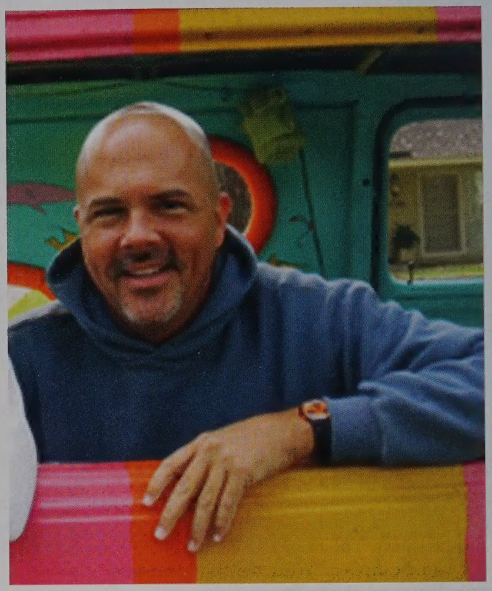
Rev. Johnson's advice for a healthy spiritual life? "Don't just take it face value, everything you've been told that religion is about. Make it your own. Keep asking questions 'till it becomes your spiritual body, not somebody else's."

www.resurrectionmcc.org

—ED

# A Day in The Life of . . .

## Mitch Pengra - Art Teacher



Mitch Pengra has been the Art Teacher at The Parish School for 10 years. The School creates a positive and nurturing learning environment that empowers children with communication differences to develop effective, lifelong communication skills. Mitch always got along with children. He has a passion for helping kids communicate, and along with his BFA in Painting and Drawing and an MA in Child Development, he follows his passion through art.

Mitch aims to teach his students that everyone has their own way of doing things, and not to be concerned with the way others do things. He wants them to be secure in their own beliefs, so that they will achieve their language goals and take risks to add to the project in front of them.

"The kids are interesting," says Mitch. "But the school is staffed with special people, too. We all have weird traits."

He was concerned once about being gay. He thought to himself that, even though the School embraces his artistic abilities and purpose, every year begins with new students and parents that don't know him. His concern passed quickly as the school has always been supportive. In fact, Mitch co-produced an in-your-face theatrical show a few years ago called In Gay Company, which about 10 fellow teachers attended and drove down to Galveston to further support him at the Opera House.

Mitch is fun, positive and upbeat, which is reflected in his classroom, friendships and his art car. Look for him truckin' around the city in his orange-green-purple-yellow-striped AquaVan (painted blue inside with sea creatures and crazy fish). Don't jump into the roofless art-on-wheels, as you may ruin his students' artwork, the beanbag chairs and the well-stocked cooler.

–JG

Houston GLBT
COMMUNITY CENTER
"Your Queer Home in Houston"

Mission Statement
"The Houston Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center provides a home for the birth, nurture and celebration of our organizations, institutions and culture; cares for our individuals and groups in need; educates the public and our community; and empowers our individuals and groups to achieve their fullest potential."
For information call 713-524-3818 or visit the center at 3400 Montrose Blvd. Suite 207.

# InterPride

## Vive la Différence

As you read this, I would like to thank you for showing your support for one of the eight Pride celebrations in the State of Texas. As you may know, Pride events are held in Amarillo, Austin, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio and Waco. In the past, Pride events have even been held in Corpus Christi and Galveston, but unfortunately these have disappeared. Here in Texas, Pride events range in size from a couple of hundred people to over 150,000. Although most are in June a couple are held in the fall.

What you may not know is that there are more than 300 Pride celebrations around the world. Most of the organizations that produce these events are members of InterPride, the International Association of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Coordinators. The organization was founded more than twenty years ago by five of the organizations that produced the first Pride marches in 1970. The idea was for the organizations to maintain contact with each other to share information and resources to strengthen each other. As the organization grew, it evolved from a national network to an organization with members on six continents providing education, information and resources to its members. We take the combined experience and collected information of the those that produce successful Pride events and share it with those organizations still building up Prides in their communities or with newer members of established organizations.

Through stored information and personal contact, InterPride facilitates the tradition of local organizers producing Pride events for their local communities. The main venue for this contact and education is the annual InterPride World Conference held in October. At this conference nearly two hundred delegates attend workshops and seminars on subjects including fund raising, publicity, volunteer retention and time management among others. At this time the organization conducts its annual business and begins organizing for the coming year. The delegates also select a theme for the coming Pride year. Last October, we honored our conference host, Montreál, as well as all of our non-American delegates with "Vive la Différence," celebrating the diversity in the Gay, Lesbian and Transgender communities around the world.

InterPride also authorizes several regional conferences during the early spring to assist organizations that cannot send delegations to the World Conference. The agenda at these conferences is tailored to the character of the regions they serve and more accessible to those organizations operating on smaller budgets.

The large majority of Pride organizations are groups of volunteers freely giving their time and energies to create the parades, festivals, picnics, dances and other events that comprise the local Pride celebration. Most operate on a largely donated budget and only a very few are commercial enterprises. The support they find in InterPride, the education from more established organizations and the sharing of ideas with those similar in size to themselves helps them become stronger and more stable as well as build a better Pride for the city or town in which they are based.

So, in honor of our sibling organizations that produce Prides in the seven other cities in Texas, we selected as our theme "Pride as Big as Texas." In the spirit of mutual assistance we have invited those organizations to contribute an article on their Pride celebration. We hope it will stimulate your interest to visit one of those fine events and support the people who produce them. It has been my honor to attend most of these celebrations and I know that you will enjoy them.

Again, go out and enjoy your Pride celebrations this summer. Be visible. When we show ourselves as a community, those just coming out know that they are not alone and joining us is easier for them. It also shows the strength of our numbers and increases our political influence. And if you are able, make a donation or volunteer your time to your local Pride organization. Either will be welcome and it is a good cause that benefits you!

Have a great Pride.

Mark Willis
Vice President Member Services,
InterPride, The International Association of Lesbian,
Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Pride Coordinators

# Austin Pride Parade

## Sponsored by Austin Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

Austin is a study in contradictions. It's a city that jealously guards its greenbelts and sensitive watersheds, while aggressively pursuing high tech industry and commercial growth. It's one of those cities where immaculate Victorian homes coexist downtown with modern high rises and old stone churches heavily adorned with stained glass.

It's a city of many gardens, public and private, showcasing everything from exotic flowers to sculpture. The quality of its arts and theater rivals cities twice its size. It's also home to some of the best eat-with-your-fingers barbeque joints in Texas.

Austin is truly queer—in both the old and new definitions.

The most strikingly queer aspect of Austin is the lack of a "Gay District," in spite of its large gay population.

One of the first questions out of the mouths of gay newcomers to Austin is "Where's the Gay District?"

Austin's straight community is so tolerant and accepting, there's no need for one. One reason for this is that the people of Central Texas are some of the most educated and progressive in Texas.

Some reasons for this: Austin is not only home to UT, it's the capital of the Lone Star State, the "Live Music Capital of the World," and home to the largest nightlife district between Las Vegas and New Orleans.

Gay Pride is no stranger to Austin, which boasts some of the most celebrated gay events in the Southwest.

Austin is alive with cultural diversity, public celebrations and exciting events for gay and straight alike. "Keep Austin Weird" is the city's unofficial, yet warmly received motto, marking one of the reasons it is considered a safe place for all.

Premier events include Splash and the Women's Dance. Splash attracts droves of gay and gay-friendly fun seekers to the nude beaches of Hippy Hollow near the start and the end of summer's heat, while the Women's Dance lures more than 1,000 lesbians to Fiesta Gardens on the opening eve of every Austin Pride weekend.

To promote solidarity across the Lone Star State, Austin's Pride committee joined with several other major Texas cities in adopting "Pride as Big as Texas," for this year's theme.

Austin's parade owes much of its success to the determined leadership of Chad Ballard, who chaired the committee for 2002 (its first year) and 2003. Chad is succeeded this year by Cecilia Gratias, who has been a committee member since its inception. Chad will continue in an advisory and support role this year.

"Until 2002, Austin was the only major Texas city not to have a Gay Pride Parade," said Chad.

At that time, the Austin Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce developed interest in a celebratory celebration in remembrance of Stonewall. The members of the AGLCC moved forward with great exuberance, though they had little personal experience in parades. Pursuing the insight and experience of the Houston and San Antonio parade organizations seemed the most logical step to take.

In an article published in the Texas Triangle, AGLCC president Grant Hennig wrote, "The Houston parade committee helped us a lot; they have an unbelievably organized parade." Both cities' influence was very positive indeed, as both the 2002 and 2003 parades attracted an estimated 20,000 cheering spectators along their downtown processions. Each year has attracted nearly 400 participants, including Austin's AIDS service and assistance organizations, car clubs, show girls of both sexes, a variety of gay-affirming non-profit associations and commercial companies supporting the gay community through parade sponsorships.

This year, the Houston committee invited Austin's organizers to its kickoff meeting. Dallas and San Antonio have continued their support with invitations for inclusion in their events. Without this support, Austin's event could not have been what it is today.

The parades occur in the typically eclectic Austin style, with the sun setting in the west, participants moving toward the Texas Capitol to the north, and Austin's famed Mexican free-tail bats beating their way down the Colorado River to the east.

"Because of the cohesion of Texas' major gay communities and their organizers," Cecilia said, "We're looking forward to another smashing success. We intend nothing less than to create a series of events that will make the entire gay community swell with Pride as Big as Texas." ▼

> Austin's Pride Weekend, which kicks off June 4, is a celebration with dozens of events to experience. Events range from the Women's Dance, known in most circles as the "Girl Dance," to club events throughout the city. The weekend culminates with the daylong Pride Festival.

Above: A group of friends at the Austin Pride Parade
Photo by Mark V. Lynch of Latent Images Photography
Opposite: Performance at the Austin Pride Festival

# Austin Pride Festival

## Sponsored by The Lesbian & Gay Rights Lobby of Texas

Texas Pride Weekend in Austin continues to distinguish itself as a "must-see" event on the annual Pride calendar! With the addition of a parade and a growing number of exciting events, including the perennially popular Texas Pride Festival, Austin will definitely be the place to be June 4-6, 2004!

The Texas Pride Festival (June 6, noon-8pm), sponsored by the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, showcases Austin's well-known standing as the "Live Music Capitol of the World" with incredible local and regional bands onstage throughout the day. With 200 vendors, live entertainment, and thousands of Proud Texans, the Festival ignites the shores of Austin's Town Lake with the energy and excitement of this important celebration. LGRL's Texas Pride Coordinator Heath Riddles is excited about the growth of the weekend. "Austin Pride is really getting on the map," Riddles says. "We're seeing more and more people coming into town for the weekend from other areas. And why not, Austin's LGBT community throws a great party, and the rest of the city has so much to offer as well."

The Texas Pride Sunrise Brunch, the Texas Women's Pride Dance and the Austin Pride Parade round out the weekend's annual events. Combined attendance is well over 30,000 and growing every year!

The Texas Pride Sunrise Brunch, the Texas Women's Pride Dance and the Texas Pride Festival are all sponsored by the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas. All proceeds from these events help fund the critical work of LGRL. In addition to LGRL's renowned work within the Texas Legislature, LGRL has concentrated its energy and resources into a series of highly focused and effective initiatives aimed at changing the face of Texas politics. The most aggressive of these is Equality Knocks, a voter I.D. initiative designed to educate and empower LGBT-friendly voters in Texas. To find out more about Equality Knocks, LGRL and Texas Pride Weekend 2004, please visit www.lgrl.org. ▼

LGRL TEXAS

# Expanding

To meet the growing demand. Qtexas Magazine has expanded our distribution. Our Houston office is located at 3400 Montrose, Suite 225, in the heart of Houston's gay and lesbian community.

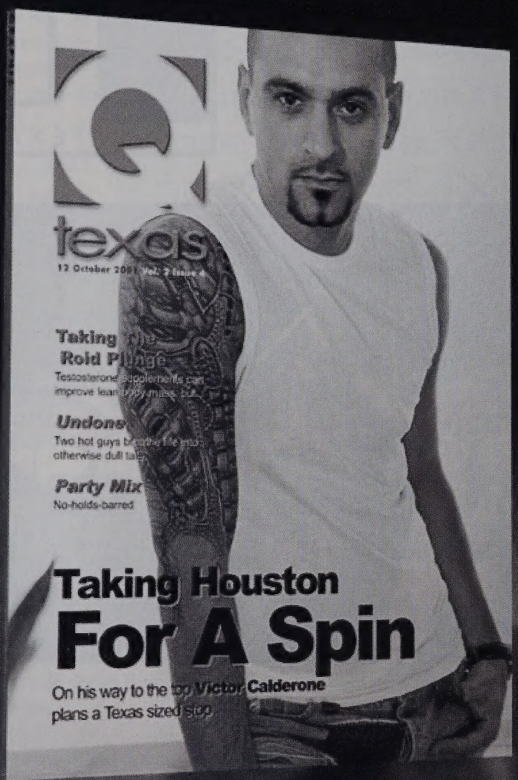
# Growing

Qtexas Magazine is excited to introduce Mr. Ed Alvarez to our staff. Ed joins us as our Houston Advertising Executive.

# Reaching Texas

Qtexas Magazine, The Pride of the Lone Star State, blankets Texas. If you want to reach over 50,000 Texans in one of the largest gay markets, Qtexas is the HOT choice. Read about Texas, its hotties, happenings and what's next every week in Qtexas Magazine.

Online at QtexasMagazine.com

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# Fort Worth Pride

## Tarrant County Gay Pride Week Events 2004

Saturday June 5, 2004
Pride Softball Game at Greenway Park 10–2 pm
Food, fun and prizes

Sunday June 6
Gay Pride Parade 2 pm, line-up at intersection of Rosedale and Jennings

GayFest 2004 Corral Club - North 40
Bill at (817) 335-0196 www.corralclub.com

Monday June 7
TBA

Tuesday June 8
Community Rainbow Rally 7 pm at Agape' M.C.C.
Gay Pride Games night and Pool/Dart Tournaments at Best Friends Club
www.bestfriendsclub.net

Wednesday June 9
"Gay Pride Karaoke" Best Friends Club
Fun and Prizes

Thursday June 10
Starlight AIDS Benefit Show 9 pm at Best Friends Club
Empress XXV Melody Lane
EmpressXXV@ICFWA.org

Friday June 11
"Taste of Ft. Worth Pride" at Corral Club 7–9 pm
"Boots and Boxers" 651 Club 9 pm – 2 am Prizes and fun
"CampTown Ladies Show" – Corral Club 10 pm

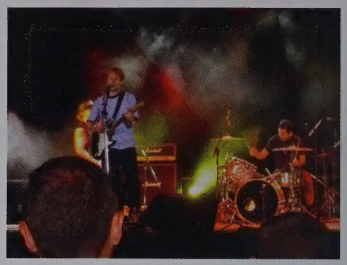
Saturday June 12
Gay Pride Week Picnic 12–8 pm Forest Park Pavilion
7th St. Fort Worth, Texas
Dianne (817) 263-4255 tcgpwa@mail.com

Sunday June 18–20
Q Cinema Film Festival
Locations TBA
www.qcinema.org

Top: A colorful float in Ft. Worth's Pride Parade
Above: A float for Ft. Worth's Cowtown Leathermen group

# Razzle Dazzle Dallas

## Dallas' June Pride Event



Razzle Dazzle Dallas (RDD) returns to its roots in the historic Fair Park with its 27th annual festival June 12, 2004. RDD, the Texas-size "not-to-miss" event for the North Texas area, is Dallas' only June pride event organized by community volunteers.

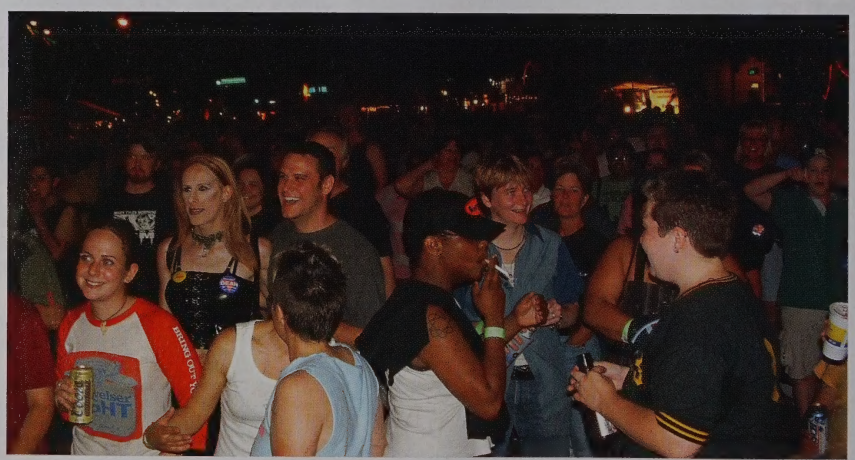
The 2003 RDD event "Techno Colour" was the largest yet with more than 20,000 people, 150 booths, 36 attractions and five live bands including Village People, Pansy Division and Tribe 8. The 2004 festival, which has outgrown its ten-year Cedar Springs location, proves to be even bigger and better with extended hours, a larger venue and air conditioning!

RDD, conceived in 1977 by some of Dallas' best-known activists, started as a Dallas Pride party and in 1978 was a Pride book show. On a warm June night in 1979, an estimated 3,500 Texas revelers filled the Hall of State at Fair Park to celebrate RDD and Pride. That night, a Dallas tradition was born.

In 1987, RDD secured their nonprofit status and its June Pride event evolved into a celebration of diversity and a fundraiser for HIV/AIDS. Over the years, RDD has distributed more than one million dollars to its beneficiaries and has grown to include "Home For The Holidays" and "The Emergency Travel Funds Project" for people living with AIDS.

Don't miss the 2004 RDD festival June 12. Information on entertainment, attractions, hotel and airline discounts, and tickets are available at www.razzledazzledallas.org

Saturday, June 12, 2004 at Fair Park 3 pm to 12 am. ▼



Top: Concert at Razzle Dazzle Dallas Above: Revelers enjoying all the festival has to offer
Opposite: Two of the Razzle Dazzle Dallas festival's creative costumes

# Dallas, Texas

## Saturday, June 12, 2004 at Fair Park

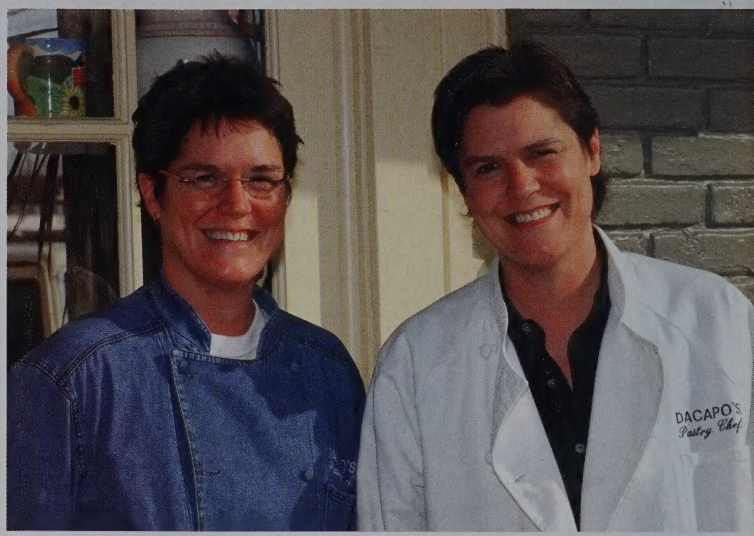
# A Day in the Life of . . .

## Lisa & Teresa Biggerstaff - Dacapo's Pastry & Deli

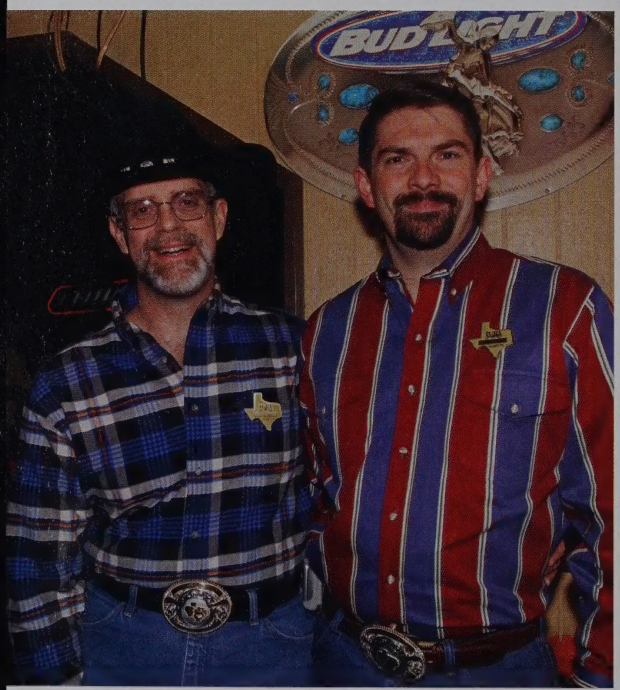
Dacapo, a musical term meaning "from the beginning," is used as a direction to repeat a passage. Begin with the scent of pita chips and garlic baking in the oven permeating the kitchen. Pause to indulge in the aroma of a warm culinary heaven. Slowly approach the end with the tart sweetness of the key lime cheesecake melting in your mouth.

Nestled on the corner of Studewood and E. 11th St. in The Heights, Dacapo's Pastry & Deli approaches its 10th year in business. It offers catering services, including cakes for weddings and other special occasions, corporate box lunches, and party trays, as well as a simple menu of pastries, soups, salads, homemade breads and sandwiches for a casual dining experience. Lisa and Teresa describe themselves as a balancing act, which makes for a good, solid business. And this one is made with the love of family and for the love of unforgettable food..

–JG




Dacapo's boasts 20+ desserts of 5-star quality from the simple, delectable chocolate chip cookie to the layered flavors of tiramisu. Lisa and Teresa guarantee that it is love at first bite!




## Kevin Tobin & Bryan Hopkins - Texas Gay Rodeo Association

The Texas Gay Rodeo Association was founded in the summer of 1983. November 1984 heralded the first annual Texas Gay Rodeo, beginning the tradition of the TGRA November rodeo which continues to this day.

The growth of TGRA coincided with the fight against HIV/AIDS. The founding members recognized the need for the community to pull together to raise money to combat this epidemic in light of limited government intervention and funding."

Since its inception, TGRA members, Royalty, and community have raised and donated over $2 million to Texas charities.

TGRA is administered and run totally by volunteers with a membership in the hundreds. There are many committees within each of the five chapters that exist to meet the widerange of challenges in hosting a rodeo and maintaining a focused charitable concern. Bryan Hopkins is the current President of the Houston TGRA chapter. He has attended Gay Rodeos for over 10 years and has served on the association since relocating to Houston.

There are many areas of TGRA and degrees of involvement available to its members. Our success is entirely dependent on the support of the membership and the community that we serve. We are engaged in fighting a war on infectious diseases and terminal illnesses, but prefer the rodeo arena as our battleground.
www.tgra.com

–RM

# San Antonio

## San Antonio PrideFest

Committee would like to invite you to our 22nd annual PrideFest event here in the great city of San Antonio, Texas.

San Antonio offers a wide variety of both the old and the new. Most people know San Antonio as the town with the Alamo and the River walk, but it is becoming known for its cultural events as well.

San Antonio captures the spirit of Texas in its true sense, large and rustic. Now the ninth largest city in the United States, the city has retained its sense of history and tradition while carefully blending in cosmopolitan progress. The city has always been a crossroads and a meeting place throughout time, from the earlier explorers to the multitude of military bases within the surrounding areas to visitors from around the globe. San Antonio has embraced people from near and far encouraging diversity and culture in the area.

PrideFest is a celebration of the diversity of San Antonio. We strive to provide a venue to express pride and equality of all people of San Antonio and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender community. The event allows us an opportunity for open exchange of ideas and education. As our mission/purpose states, "The purpose of establishing a Pride event is to promote cohesiveness among gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and supportive community organizations within the San Antonio and surrounding area, where all such organizations can participate equally in a positive environment to promote pride and self-worth for members of the local gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community."

PrideFest San Antonio has been around in one form or another since the early 1980's and has grown from a few hundred participants to thousands. Each year as the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender communities reach out and advocate for each other, small victories take place. Right after our 2003 event, we received word that the Supreme Court overturned the Sodomy Law in the State of Texas. Great sighs of relief went through the communities, but with reservations. We are constantly trying to prove ourselves to the "outside" and one way we do that is to be seen.

PrideFest is growing each year, and with that we see more legal victories, more of corporate America offering domestic partner benefits and more acceptance. PrideFest San Antonio is again pushing the envelope, and seeking to grow to new heights. Several years ago we started having our annual parade at night, which allows our creativeness to be shown with shiny lights. We will continue that tradition this year with our Parade at the Sunset Station Complex.

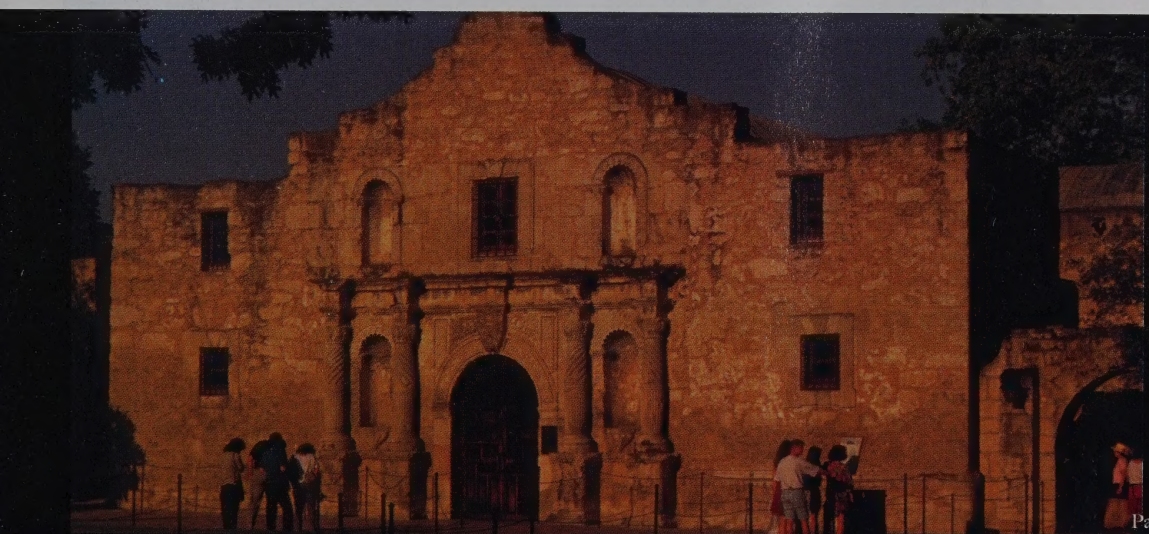
This year PrideFest Picnic and the Parade will be held at the historic Sunset Station, which was built in 1902. Sunset Station was one of the stops for the famous Sunset Limited, a train that connected San Francisco with New Orleans and San Antonio.

Our theme this year is "Power of Pride"— "Building Community and Relationships." We are P.O.P.'ing out of our shells and working together to build our community to be stronger, healthier, and diverse, and we are beginning to build relationships with the surrounding communities that will last forever.

PrideFest will take place on June 19, 2004 with admission starting at 12:00pm. Sunset Station is located at 1174 E. Commerce, (just east of I-37). With free admission, The Parade will kick-off at 9:00pm.

For more information, visit our web site: www.pridefestsa.org

We look forward to seeing you there. ▼



# Amarillo

## Amarillo's June Pride Festival

OUTstanding
AMARILLO

Invites you

to join

the Texas Panhandle

to celebrate

PRIDEfest 2004

June 26th, 2-6 pm

Thompson Park

games, food and music

PRIDEfest film festival: June 21-23
watch the website for more details

For more information,
contact OUTstanding Amarillo at:

OUTstanding Amarillo
211 E. 16th Ave. Amarillo, TX 79101
-or-
outstandingama@sbcglobal.net
806-337-1688
www.outstandingamarillo.org

Amarillo is Outstanding during its Pride

# Waco
## Central Texas Pride

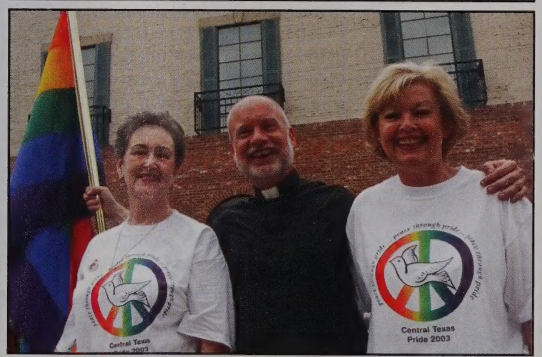
Central Texas Pride began in 1993 with the founding of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance of Central Texas. The first Pride event took place over the Labor Day weekend and did not include a Parade/March. It did include a banquet, a festival in the park, and a Sunday outdoor church service with Mel White as the guest speaker.

Since that time, Central Texas Pride has evolved. Following the first year, the organizers of the second year had Troy Perry as guest speaker. The fifth year saw the start of the Parade/March through downtown Waco.

Central Texas Pride has had many events over the years and has changed its date many times. Pride is now celebrated the first week in October. This year the dates are October 1 – 3. Although plans are still being made, Pride will most likely include an Interfaith Service at the Central Texas MCC From The Heart, a PFLAG Banquet, a Pride Show by the Royal, Sovereign & Imperial Court of the Central Texas Empire, a Parade/March sponsored by the Alliance, as well as some sort of festival and entertainment sponsored by the Alliance.

As Central Texas Pride 2004 develops, information will be posted on the Alliance website: glact.org. Co-Chairpersons for this year's event are Parker Willson and Jerry Pierce. Both can be reached by e-mailing pride@glact.org. For further information either e-mail or call 254-756-2101. ▼

Photos by Yvonne K. Feece



Dear Friend in Pride,

You have probably been as upset as we have by the continuing homophobia seen in the news. National televangelists attack gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. These attacks have increased in the wake of the news about the possibility of GLBT marriage. The FBI reports that violence against us is a significant portion of bias-motivated crime in America. Politicians continue to devise ways to legalize discrimination in our community. Here in Houston, the right wing won the vote in a recent election barring domestic partner benefits for city workers. The most important factor allowing this bigotry to continue is that the good people of this city and county who might support us know little about us.

The Pride Committee of Houston works year-round to host events that showcase our GLBT community in all of its diversity. The fabulous night time Pride Parade that you see every June is a celebration of both individual pride and pride in our community. It is also the biggest GLBT event in Houston and the Southwest, so it receives a lot of positive media coverage. It's a great opportunity to educate society about the scope of our community. Additionally, attending the parade is the first step out of the closet for many of us, starting us on a journey in which we educate many others.

The mission of Pride—celebrating individual pride, commemorating our community's history and educating society—can change the world. Surveys show that when we come out to the people around us, and when people are educated about real GLBT lives, bigotry diminishes.

Pride is everything and everyday. With your help, the Pride Committee can continue to produce events and resources to educate and empower all of us. Your contribution today allows us to work year-round, which is necessary to produce even more successful events and programs year after year.

Just as we are trying to change the world through Pride, we are always open to your suggestions. PCOH holds open Board of Directors meetings the second Tuesday of each month, at 7:00 pm, in the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, an accessible, secure city facility located at 1475 W. Gray. All meetings are open to the public and participation is highly encouraged. You may also contact us anytime through the Pride Line at 713-529-6979 or via e-mail at info@pridehouston.org.

Become a Friend of Pride. Please consider a tax-deductible gift of $250, $100 or whatever you can afford. To thank you for your gift, you will receive a host of benefits, which are detailed on the enclosed card. Please use the enclosed envelope to return your gift today. Not only will you receive VIP bleacher seating to view and enjoy the Pride Parade, but your contribution also allows the Pride Committee of Houston to produce empowering events and educational resources throughout the year.

Yours in Pride,

Nick Brines
President
Pride Committee of Houston

BECOME A FRIEND OF Pride

# Become a Friend of Pride

...and receive these wonderful benefits!

## Red Level

VIP bleacher seating at the Pride Parade
on Saturday, June 26, 2004
$25

## Orange Level

2 VIP bleacher seats at the Parade
2004 Pride as Big as Texas T-shirt
$50

## Yellow Level

2 VIP bleacher seats at the Parade
2 Pride as Big as Texas T-shirts
ticket to the Lift Off Launch Party on Saturday,
June 12, at the George R. Brown Convention Center
$100

## Green Level

4 VIP bleacher seats at the Parade
4 Pride as Big as Texas T-shirts
2 tickets to the Lift Off Party
$250

## Blue Level

8 VIP bleacher seats at the Parade
8 Pride as Big as Texas T-shirts
4 tickets to the Lift Off Party
2 tickets to the Pride Cabaret on Friday, June 25,
in downtown Houston
$500

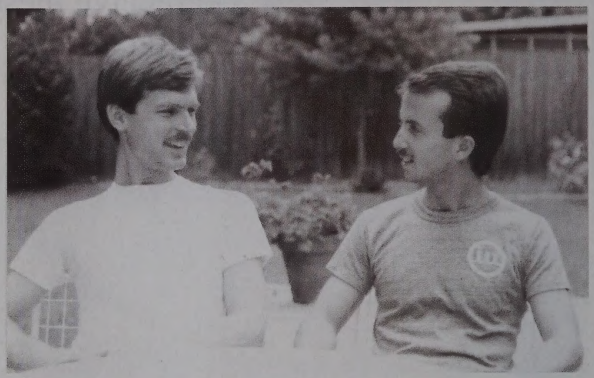
## Purple Level

12 VIP bleacher seats at the Parade
12 Pride as Big as Texas T-shirts
8 tickets to the Lift Off Party
4 tickets to the Pride Cabaret
$1000

All contributions are tax-deductible

# A Day in The Life of...

## Bill & Barry - 23 Years and counting . . .



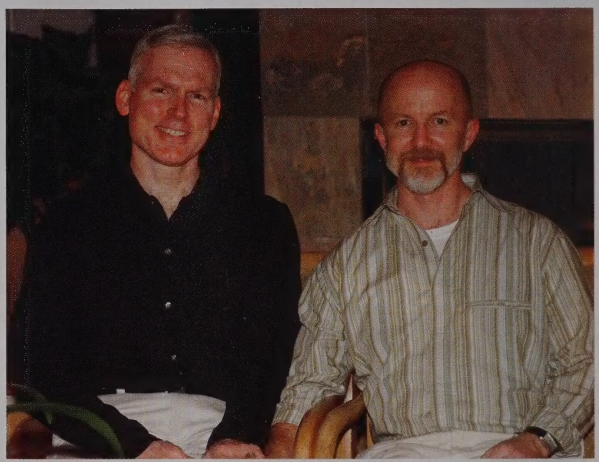
Bill and Barry met back in 1981 while working together. "When I opened the door our eyes met and I knew right then," says Barry. As soon as they started talking there was an instant connection, and they decided to have lunch together. Working for a large company, they didn't run into each other often. In fact, Barry wasn't sure that Bill was gay. He found out later through one of Bill's co-workers. It wasn't until the Fourth of July weekend 1981 that they saw each other again. They have been together ever since!

What's their secret? There is no secret! Bill and Barry are just a lot alike. They have very similar personalities, although Bill seems to be a bit more reserved than Barry. Of course, being totally in love might have something to do with it, too.

"A lot of the times people just think too hard on their relationships. We're just doing what we feel. If you have to think about it that hard then something is missing," said Barry. Bill adds, "We just enjoy being together. It doesn't have to be anything fun or exciting. Just being together gives us so much pleasure." Barry smiles at Bill and says, "We could never think of being apart."

Until the last couple of years they really hadn't thought about getting married, although they did go through steps to document legally their relationship. Several years ago Bill and Barry attended a symposium at Empower by the Moore & Hunt Law Firm and learned about the importance of legally documenting a same sex relationship. "Even though you think everything will be ok, you can't count on it," said Barry. So they set up Powers of Attorney, Wills and Trusts to insure that they would be able to protect their rights. Legally, a gay couple is not automatically protected no matter how long they've been together.

—RM



'We just happen to be two men instead of a man and a woman. That's the only difference,' says Bill. Two men that have been in love for 23 years! It's beautiful!

## Alexa Ramirez - #98 Houston Energy

Alexa Ramirez graduated from the University of Houston with a Bachelor's in Science for Kinesiology — Exercise Science in 2002. She is an exercise physiologist by day. In her spare time she plays on the offensive line for the Houston Energy, Houston's three-time championship football team of the Women's Professional Football League. Ramirez, a two-year veteran to the team, got involved with the Houston Energy after attending several home games. With a strong desire to get back into sports, Alexa decided to prove the masses wrong by tackling the arena of male dominated football. In the off-season, Ramirez plays for the X-Treme, of the Houston Women's Flag Football League to keep up her training.
www.houstonenergyfootball.com

—RM

# The 2004 Pride Committee of Houston

The Pride Committee is an energetic group of volunteers who work year-round to produce the annual Pride Celebration for Houston, which marks the anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion, the beginning of the modern American gay and lesbian rights movement. The Board of Directors meets the second Tuesday of every month at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray at 7 pm. The meetings are open to the general public. Sub-Committees have regularly scheduled meetings throughout the month to accommodate volunteers' schedules. PCOH also reaches out to Pride organizations around the region and throughout the world through its membership in InterPride, the International Association of Lesbian and Gay Pride Coordinators.

The Pride Committee of Houston brings the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community together to celebrate individual pride, commemorate our community's history and educate society for the liberation of all people. We salute the many volunteers who sacrifice their time and energy in pursuit of these goals.

Pride Committee of Houston

P.O. Box 66071
Houston, TX 77266-6071

Phone: 713-529-6979
Fax: 713-529-6929

Visit us on the web at
www.pridehouston.org

# Officers

JOHN SCHILLING
Treasurer

NICK BRINES
President

JASON WILSON
Vice-President

RUDY MARTINEZ
Secretary

# The 2004 Pride Committee of Houston

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Director
Marketing & Promotions

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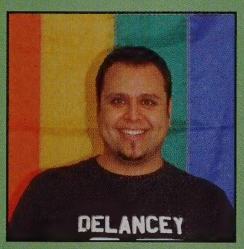
Public & Media Relations




TROY MENN
Director
Pride Cabaret

MARK WILLIS
InterPride Vice President of Member Services

# The 2004 Pride Committee of Houston

## Committee Members

DICK DICKERSON
Parade

MANNY GUTIERREZ
Parade

BILL BURFORD
Parade

JOHN DOBORSKI
Parade

JAY DELGADO
Parade

JACK VALINSKI
Program Coodinator

TROY CHRISTENSEN
Videographer

CHRIS ALANIS
Volunteer Chair

RUSTY MARTIN
Financial Manager

# Magazine

REBECCA MAHAFFEY
Editor
&
Director of Regional
Pride Relations

YVONNE FEECE
Editor

STEFANIE SILVANO
Art Director

KEN DONNELLY
Contributor

Not Pictured: TERESA CUNNINGHAM
Copy Editor

# HAPPY HOUSTON PRIDE

AS BIG AS TEXAS

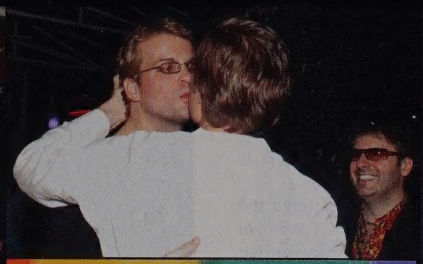
CELEBRATING 30 YEARS SERVING HOUSTON AND **YOU!**

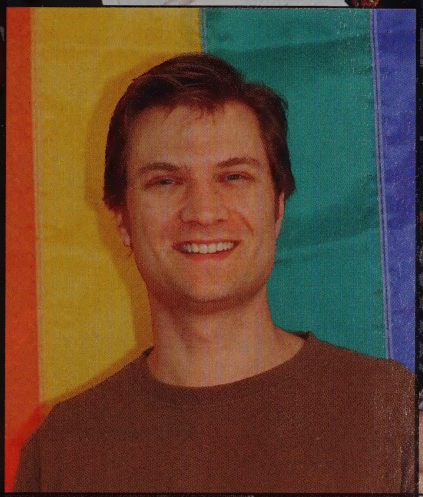
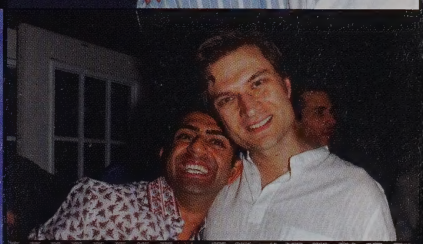
**check out the pride calendar of events at www.pridehouston.org for our BIG BASH 30th ANNIVERSARY PARTY**

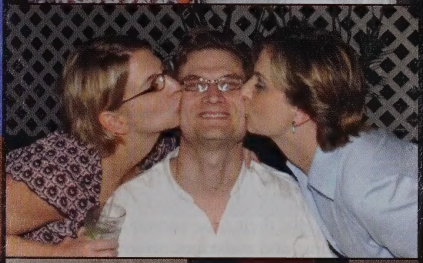
an official event of HOUSTON PRIDE

# "London calling . . ."

## PCOH Says Farewell to One of Its Best





The Pride Committee of Houston offers congratulations and best wishes to Paul Radous as he departs Houston, Texas for London, England to pursue his new employment opportunity.

Paul has been an integral component of the Pride Committee of Houston since 1998. He has served in various leadership roles since joining the organization, including Treasurer and Co-Chair of the Celebration Committee. In fact, Paul served as Treasurer for most of the planning for this year's Pride Celebration, and continues to serve as a long distance mentor to the new treasury volunteers. His efforts helped to transition a small, casually run group of volunteers into a strong, professionally operated non-profit organization. By instituting strong fiscal controls, budget planning, standardized accounting, insurance management and legal oversight, Paul pushed the Pride Committee forward to new heights. Paul was never afraid to question expenses, or to roll up his sleeves to make things better. Our organization continues to grow (and maintain the bank balances!) because of Paul to ensure Houston will always host a world-class series of events each June to educate, celebrate and commemorate our GLBT community.

Cheers, Paul! Good luck in London. Houston will miss you!

# A Day in the Life of . . .

## Brenden Stewart - Case Manager for Social Services

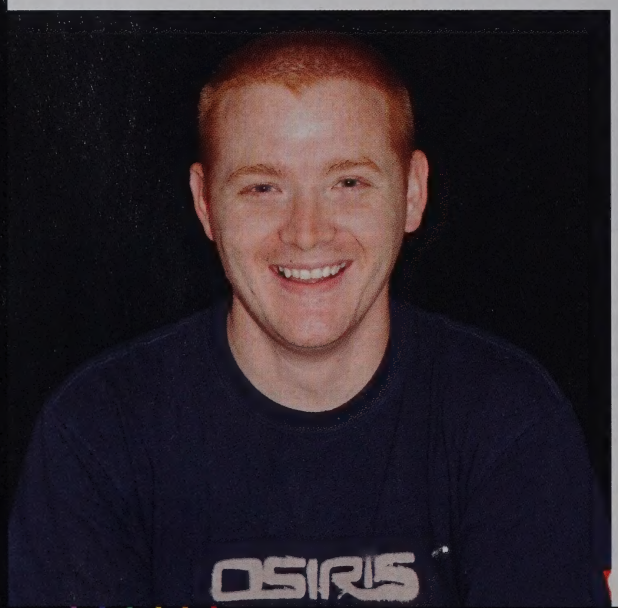
After learning more about the clinic and its involvement with HIV/AIDS education and testing, Brenden immediately offered his services as a volunteer. Although Brenden is heterosexual he was never bothered by the fact that the clinic is geared toward targeting the GLBT community.

In the next four years Brenden made his way through the ranks of the clinic, starting with front desk administrator and then moving on to Out Reach HIV/AIDS testing and finally settling into his current position as a Case Manager for Social Services.

The program with which Brenden is involved with assists people living with HIV/AIDS in obtaining housing, food, clothing and other social service needs they may have. Most of his clients are unaware of the resources that are available to them through assistance programs in the HIV/AIDS community. "Clients come into the clinic when they need help and don't know what to do. The case manager must relay this information to the client in a way that they can understand and empower themselves to do it in the future." As a case manager Brenden sets up referrals for his clients' needs and tries to resolve those needs within a given period of time. Some clients have very few needs and can get taken care of efficiently. Others have more complex issues like drug dependency and homelessness which makes it more difficult to get them on "even ground." Whatever the case may be, Brenden is there to help those who seek it.

The Montrose Clinic has been a vital part of the GLBT community's awareness of HIV/AIDS and the need for HIV/AIDS testing. Kudos to Brenden and all others out there who give their time and effort to support HIV/AIDS education, testing, and assistance programs.

—RM



## Melissa Carruba & Sallie Woodell - Couple

Who says you can't find love in a crowded bar? While most of us think this rule to be true, Melissa and Sallie are the exception. They met at a local lesbian hangout and now, two and a half years later, they have three cats, one dog, and a wonderful relationship.

many people assume that just because women are raised to find a mate for life, so they think that lesbian relationships are somehow easier than others. Although Melissa and Sallie have a great relationship, they "face the same problems that everybody faces," explains Sallie. Just because they are two women does not mean their relationship should be any different. "You have to make sure the person knows how much you care about them, how much you love them. You have to put the time into the relationship to make things work. You have to do all these things, yet they're not work because you want to be with this person," Sallie adds. "Our main problem is dealing with my families difficulty in accepting our relationship," says Sallie.

After spending the evening with these two ladies in their home full of pictures of friends, family and beloved pets, it seems like the biggest problem is keeping their pets from spilling red wine on the carpet.

—RM

# 2003 Volunteers of the Year

The Pride Committee of Houston, being a non-for-profit organization, can honestly say that, volunteers are the heart and back bone of the organization, since every Board Member freely and willingly volunteers their time to produce the annual Houston Pride Parade. The commitment and effort put forth to bring the Parade to Houston every year is immense. When most of us are racing to buy those last minute items for a joyous Thanksgiving feast or on the run to finish last minute Christmas shopping, the Pride Committee is hard at work brainstorming and organizing next year's parade. Sponsorships and donations from the community definitely allow the committee to stay alive and ultimately produce the Parade, but without that commitment and effort from our volunteers, I believe we would not have a Parade. This year, as in previous years, PCOH is committed to making sure everyone under the GLBT umbrella is being represented. With GLBT issues currently being focused on from a national level to here in our backyard of Houston, let's show our unity and commitment to these causes. Join our team and show your PRIDE AS BIG AS TEXAS!

To volunteer simply visit us at www.pridehouston.org and complete an online Volunteer Application or e-mail me at volunteers@pridehouston.org or jlara@pridehouston.org.

Jose Lara
Director of Volunteer Recruitment & Retention

Volunteer of the Year Aaron Blinka with PCOH President Nick Brines

Volunteer of the Year Cindy Hudson with PCOH Volunteer Beth Puyear

PCOH Volunteers appreciation party

# In the Lead for 2004

## Pride as Big as Texas Grand Marshals

### Jerry Simoneaux

President of Stonewall Lawyers for 2 years Jerry, with the help of his life partner Christopher Bone, made Stonewall events a success. Among them are the Freedom to Marry Demonstration, the Alternative Family Law Seminar and the Community Law Day. He has sacrificed innumerable hours of his time promoting the professional image of the GLBT community by attending functions, fundraising events, and seminars. He serves on the State Bar of Texas Section on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification Issues as well as heading up the Houston Bar Association on AIDS Outreach for the Houston legal community.

### Sonna Alton

Director of Communication and Events for the Montrose Clinic, member of the Krewe of Olympus for 5 years, member of the Executive and Professional Association for 2 years. Sonna has also volunteered as an interviewer for the PFLAG/HATCH Youth Scholarship Foundation for the past 3 years.

Jim & Sue Null

Through their work with PFLAG, the Nulls have implemented the following projects: METRO bus signs proclaiming "Unconditional Love — Keep Families Together," GLBT training for 600 HISD principals and vice principals in 2002, in-service workshop for HISD teachers and counselors in 2000, "HATE FREE ZONE" tape for supportive churches and other buildings during Houston's Proposition 2 ballot. Sue and Jim have been honored with the following awards: Ray Hill Award for Advocacy by a Non-Attorney from the Stonewall Law Association, Champion's Award for an individual at the Transgendered Unity Banquet in 2002 (Sue), Proclamation for Mayor Lee Brown declaring Sept. 28, 2003 "Sue Null Day" sponsored by the Houston Women's Group and the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston, and recipient of a Certificate of Recognition from Councilmember Ada Edwards for being an "agent of social change, a voice for uncompromising values, and a source of unconditional love through her work in the Houston Chapter of PFLAG."

LGRL TEXAS

Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas (LGRL)

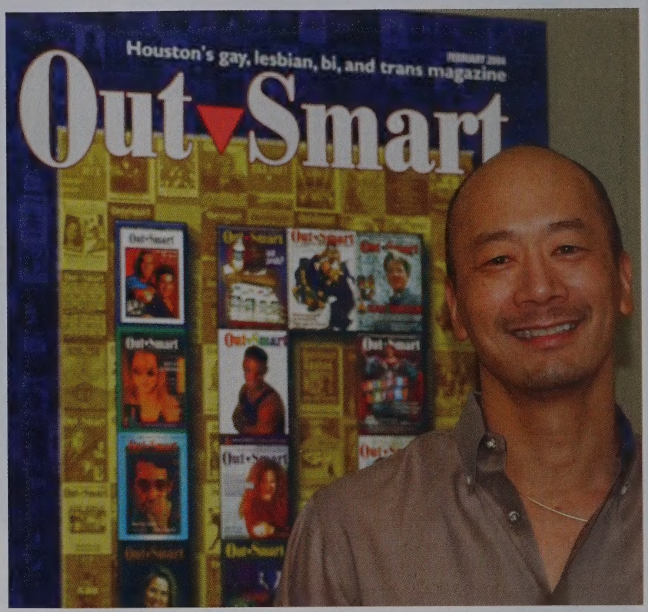
Help to increase the influence and visibility of LGBT Texans in the state legislature. Led efforts to pass the James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crime Act protecting LGBT citizens under state law, defeated attempts which would have prohibited LGBT Texans from adopting children or serving as foster parents, and continually fights against workplace discrimination.

PRIDE

AS BIG AS TEXAS

# A Day in the Life of . . .

## Greg Jeu - OutSmart Magazine




The 1993 March on Washington inspired Greg Jeu to launch OutSmart, the Houston-based GLBT magazine. "It was an incredibly healing experience," he recalls about the equal-rights event. "We were marching with thousands of other people. After being discriminated against, after having my relationship disrespected because I was gay, marching with thousands of people helped to re-energize my soul. When we came back, we were hyped and felt so empowered we wanted to do something."

OutSmart debuted in February 1994. "In our first issue we had just a handful of advertisers," Jeu recalls. "We had some pretty lean years. Today we have over 200 regular advertisers who support us and the community."

Jeu and his staff mark the magazine's tenth anniversary this year. In celebration, OutSmart will publish a limited-edition commemorative book, host special events including a fall benefit evening, and sponsor a photography contest and exhibition.

Today, the award-winning publication—one of the few GLBT monthlies in the nation—is distributed across the Houston/Galveston area and in several other Texas cities including Austin, Dallas, El Paso and San Antonio.

"We named the magazine OutSmart," Jeu says, " because we felt people needed to know how to come out safely and to be smart and educated about our rights and hopefully find the power of their own voices. We all need to know our political power and the clout that our collective voice can create." –TB

## Adam Frejvid - Model

He's young, tall, blonde, green-eyed and handsome with a disarming smile that can get you to buy anything. But he is not just the next fresh face in modeling. He is also a fresh face in Houston. Adam recently moved from Loveland, Colorado. When asked why, the answer is surprising. "I had never been here before," he laughs. "Besides, I liked the idea of living in Texas."

Modeling is a new endeavor for Adam. "I want to be a model because I am better looking than everyone," he quips. "Honestly it's because I spent most of my life hiding my body because I was overweight." Adam has lost over 100 lbs. to get the body he has today. "I wanted to make a drastic change. Modeling is my chance to come out of the shadows and stand out. It is not to show off but to prove to myself that I can do anything."

These feelings carry over into his advice for others. He notes that so many people are afraid of who they are and so afraid of rejection by others that they never reach their potential. Through his experiences of coming out to a hostile family and overcoming a weight problem he has gained valuable insights. "It doesn't matter what others think of you, but it does matter what you think of yourself." With a smirk he adds, "So when do we eat?" –KD

# 2003 Parade Review

The 25th anniversary "Silver Celebration" Pride Parade was truly a commemoration. We've come so far from where we began. Our city held worldwide attention because the Texas Homosexual Conduct Law was struck down within days before the Parade because of people in our very own community. What a way to celebrate 25 years of Pride!

A record crowd of est. 170,000 strong came together that night to watch the parade, catch beads, celebrate, and just be together. The weather was perfect and the lights on the floats were fabulous, not to mention the beautiful chandelier that hung over Montrose & Westheimer for the first time. Another first was the festive performance put on by The Strangerettes from Dallas. Seeing all the past 25 years of Grand Marshals on one float was a very moving and motivating experience for all.

Almost every year the Parade grows larger and the 2003 Parade was no exception totaling 135 entries. The 2004 Parade promises to be bigger and more spectacular than ever and we look forward to seeing a crowd as big as Texas enjoying themselves and celebrating Pride!

Silver Celebration

## 2003 SILVER CELEBRATION TROPHY WINNERS

RUBY SLIPPER
(Best walking unit)
Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce

GYPSY ROSE
(Best out-of-town unit)
Turtle Creek Chorale / The Strangerettes

EDISON
(Best lighting on a non-professionally built unit)
Community Gospel Church

HOUSTON
(Best non-professionally built motorized unit)
The Krewe of the Moons of Uranus

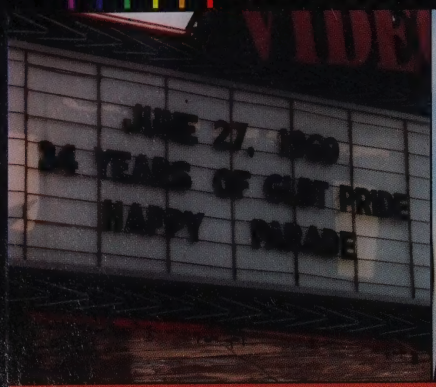
RAINBOW LIGHTS
(Best lighting on a professional built unit)
Diageo & Smirnoff Twist

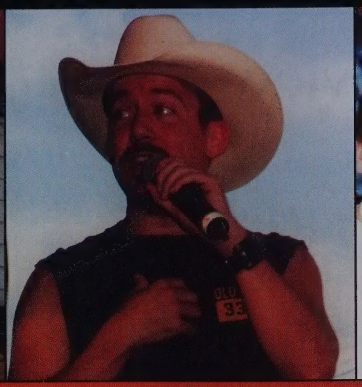
TEXAS
(Best professionally built motorized unit)
JP Morgan Chase P.R.I.D.E. Team

STONEWALL
(Best commemoration of pride)
Donald R. Watkins Memorial Foundation

SILVER CELEBRATION
(Best interpretation of theme)
Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History, Inc.

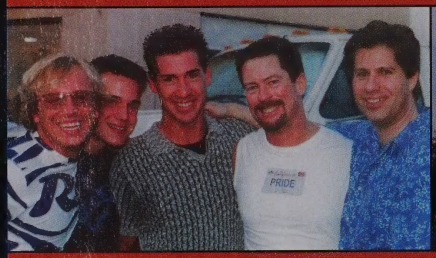
SPIRIT OF MONTROSE
(Best overall entry)
Turtle Creek Chorale / The Strangerettes

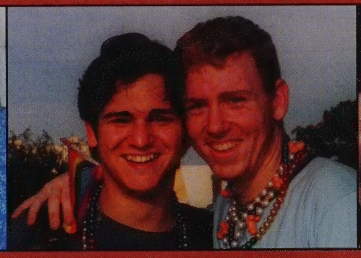


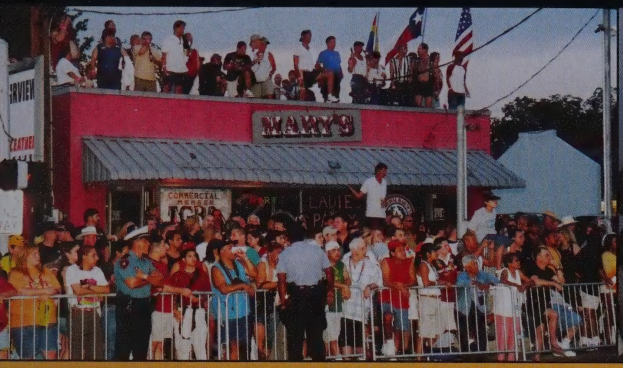



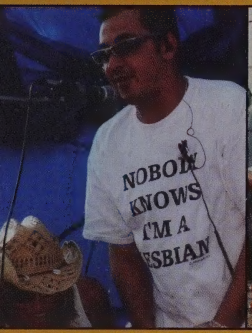
# HOUSTON PRIDE PARADE 2003

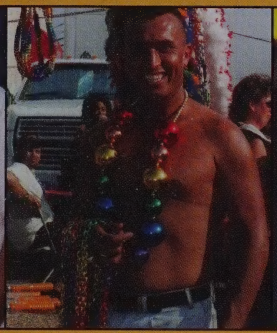
Photography by Yvonne K. Feece & Rob Martinez

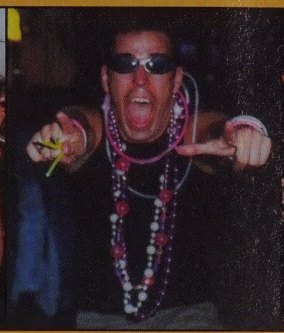



MARY'S


NOBODY
KNOWS
I'M A
LESBIAN

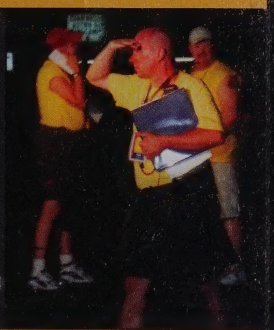


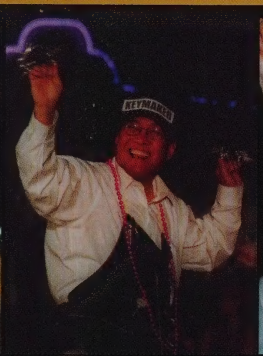


BUD LIGHT
WELCOME TO THE
SILVER CELEBRATION!
HOUSTON'S GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND
TRANSGENDER PRIDE PARADE
25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRTION

THE SILVER CELEBRATION
GRAND MARSHALS
HONORING 25 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP
1978-2003

25 YEARS OF PRIDE
BUD LIGHT

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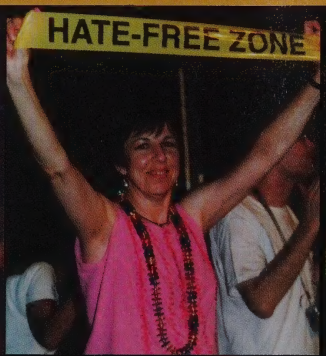
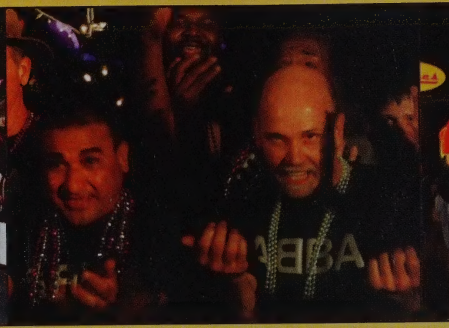

HATE-FREE ZONE

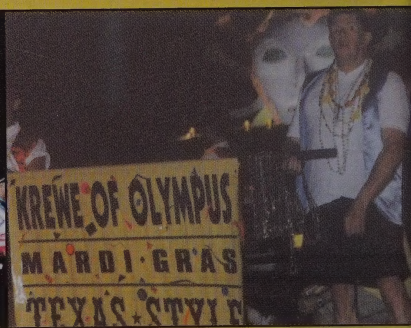
1996

EXTRABBAGANZA

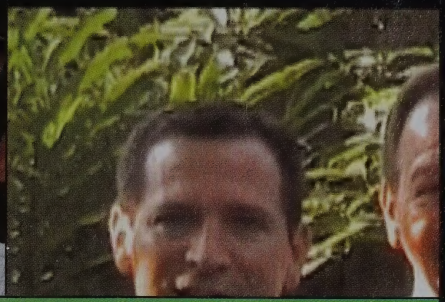


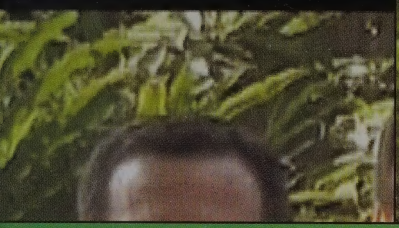
RESURRECTION

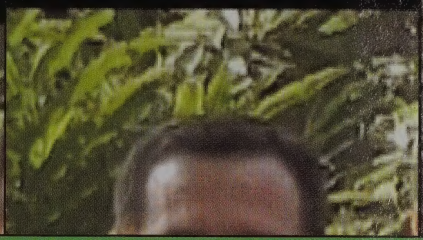
• John Lawrence • Tyron Garner
• Attorney Mitchell Katine
SUPREME COURT VICTORY!

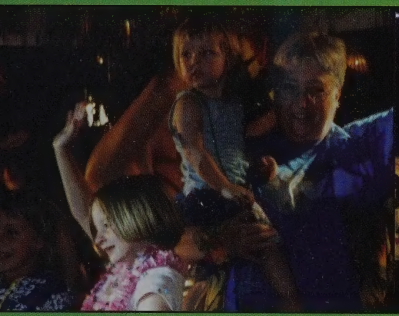

KREWE OF OLYMPUS
MARDI GRAS

HATCH

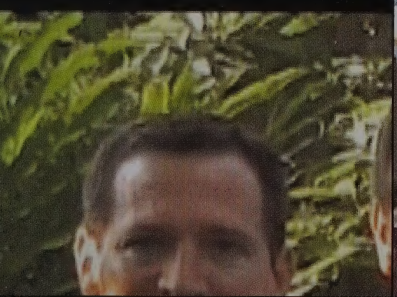


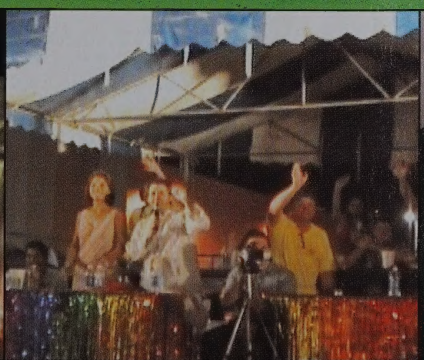


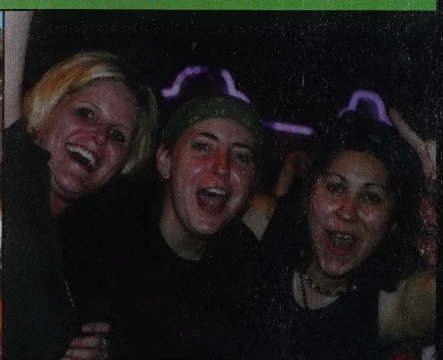


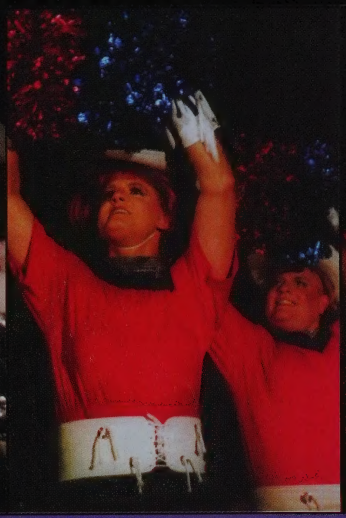


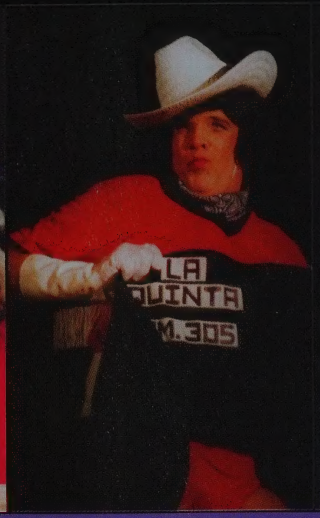
MONTROSE AREA
DEMOCRATS







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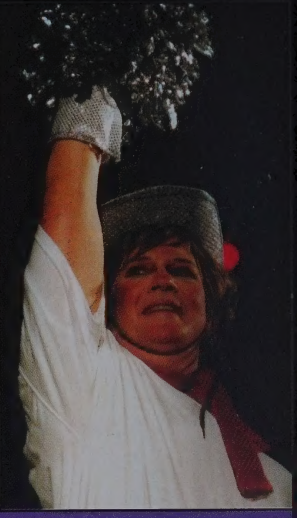
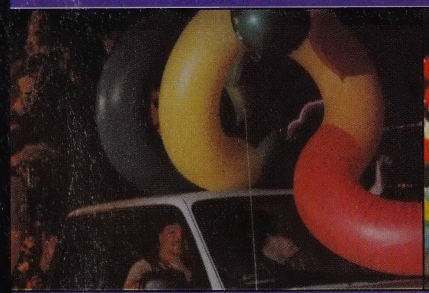
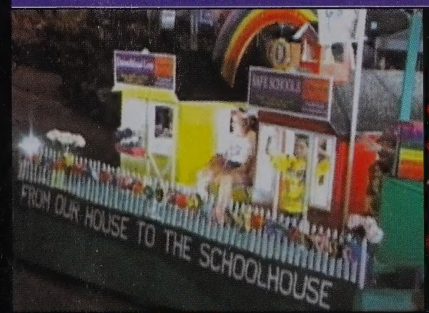
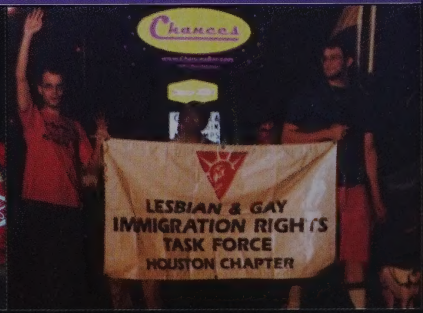


The Turtle Creek Chorale Proudly Presents
Strangerettes




FROM OUR HOUSE TO THE SCHOOLHOUSE


Chances
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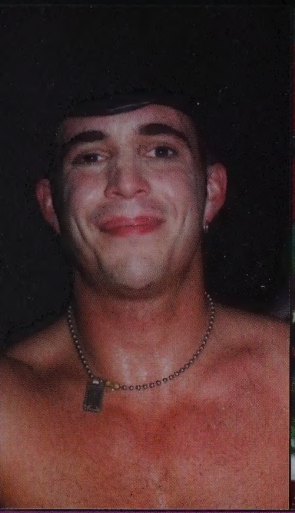
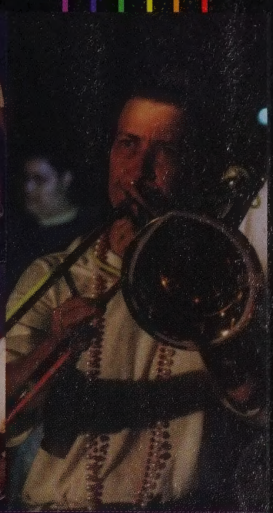
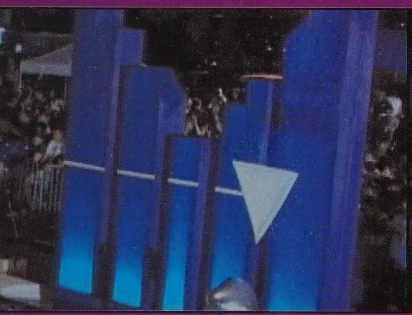
TASK FORCE
HOUSTON CHAPTER

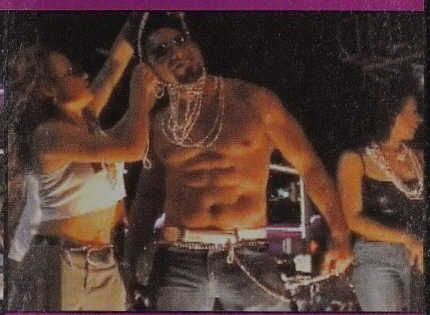


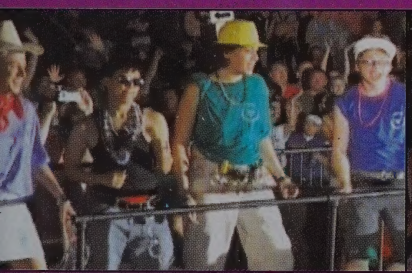
Houston
Pride
Band



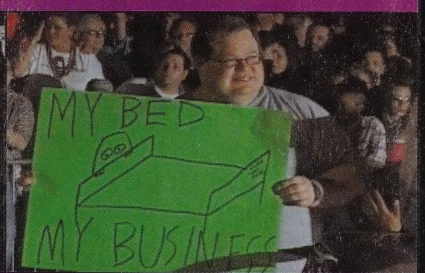


Out Smart





EMPOWER
GO STRAIGHT TO THE
GAY MARKET


MY BED
MY BUSINESS

# The Best of The Best

## 2003 Silver Celebration Trophy Winners

### 2003 SILVER CELEBRATION TROPHY WINNERS

RUBY SLIPPER
Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce

GYPSY ROSE
Turtle Creek Chorale / The Strangerettes

EDISON
Community Gospel Church

HOUSTON
The Krewe of the Moons of Uranus

RAINBOW LIGHTS
Diageo & Smirnoff Twist

TEXAS
JP Morgan Chase P.R.I.D.E. Team

STONEWALL
Donald R. Watkins Memorial Foundation

SILVER CELEBRATION
Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History, Inc.

SPIRIT OF MONTROSE
Turtle Creek Chorale / The Strangerettes

Below: The Strangerettes pose with their trophies. Photo by Rob Martinez.

Above & Below: Diageo & Smirnoff Twist

Above: Aaron & Manny giving out trophies

Above: Community Gospel Church

Above: CovTow excepts the award for The Chamber

Photo by Rob Martinez

**New! Empower 2004 has moved to Pride Week.**
**June 12th & 13th • Sat 1 - 8 pm & Sun 12 - 5 pm**

*The ever-popular Business Expo, Job Fair and the Performing and Visual Arts that make Empower a great event.*

Go Straight to the Gay Market™

JUNE 12-13

# EMPOWER 2004

- FUN
- FREE GIVEAWAYS
- DOOR PRIZES
- ENTERTAINMENT
- SHOPPING
- NETWORKING
- ROCK CLIMBING
- SPORTS & OUTDOORS
- GOOD FOOD

**And this year we've added more attractions to the list, including:**

Pet Pavilion, Kids Pavilion
Home & Garden, Performing Arts
Visual Arts, Food/Beverage Service
Big Time Entertainment

For information about becoming a vendor or sponsor, and associated benefits, contact the Chamber at www.ghglcc.org or call **713.523.7576**

**the chamber**
the greater houston glbt chamber of commerce

ECHELON
Gay & Lesbian RAINBOW Pages™
GLYP
CHASE
THE RIGHT RELATIONSHIP IS EVERYTHING.®
OutSmart
houston voice

# A Day in The Life of . . .

## Ruston Alsbrooks - Houston Police Department

### "When you look back and your heart rate goes up, that's me!"

You know the type. Big. Strong. Waiting over the hill to catch you zooming by at over 70mph. You guessed it! Ruston Alsbrooks is a 9-year veteran police officer for the Houston Police Department. His current position with the department is in the specialized division of Traffic Enforcement.

"I'm a police officer who just happens to be gay." For Alsbrooks, there was never a question of being out at work. After about a year on the force Alsbrooks came out to his peers by introducing his "other half," of now going on 11 years, to his co-workers as his "partner" which eventually made its way through the department. "Did you hear Alsbrooks is gay?" Although Alsbrooks's riding partner is his complete opposite (ex-military, Republican and, of course, straight) they are best friends on and off duty. Not everyone is comfortable being out on the force, but for Ruston "being gay was never an issue. [Besides,] you can't lie to police officers." Working as closely with each other as they do in the department makes it practically impossible for anyone to remain ambiguous. But for those who aren't yet comfortable with being out on the force, Alsbrooks stands as an example of a successful openly gay officer.

What few problems did occur after Alsbrooks came out were handled "quite harshly" through the department with great speed. "My supervisor is the one who stood up for me" and made the complaint. Personally, I couldn't imagine anyone wanting to pick a fight with this guy!

"For gays as well as straights, you get out just what you put into it. If you go in with a lot of negativity then people are going to pick up on that and you're not going to have job satisfaction. I have tremendous job satisfaction. I can't wait to put my uniform on in the morning . . . and when it's over I'm not ready to go home. I was meant to be a police officer. That was my calling."

—RM

Q-PATROL inc.

Q-Patrol was formed 10 years ago following the gay-bashing murder of Paul Broussard in the Pacific Street area. Since then, the Q-Patrol volunteers have dedicated themselves to making sure the Montrose streets are safe on the weekends. Q-Patrol organizes at the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center every Saturday night. Help keep your community safe. Call 713-528-SAFE (7233) for more information.
QPatrolHouston@yahoo.com

**thechamber**
the greater houston glbt chamber of commerce

Come Join Us! We are individuals, professionals, non-profits, businesses and corporations working to create opportunities for the GLBT community of Houston in all aspects of community life. If you are looking to meet other professionals, develop new friends, volunteer, improve leadership and personal development, or play a part in helping Houston develop into a more progressive and welcoming city, then the Chamber is the organization for you!

The Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce has been helping promote equality and fairness both inside and outside the GLBT Community for over 8 years, and today we have over 600 members who continue to challenge workforce policy, encourage fairness and open new doors to GLBT consumers and business alike.

What are some of the member benefits? The Chamber offers ongoing educational programs for professional and personal development, mentoring for leadership and business development, networking events and opportunities to develop professional relationships. You can also participate in advertising and marketing opportunities on the Chamber web site, in the annual Chamber Resource Guide and each month in the Chamber newsletter. Members also enjoy special invitation to discounted community events, social events, movie premiers, theater nights and exposure to new opportunities for giving and volunteering. Members save & benefit by member only discounts, special insurance savings, reduced fees and greater exposure to new consumers. Members are also consumers who are dedicated to directing support to businesses and corporations whose internal workforce and employment reflect diversity and full inclusion of Gay, Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender persons.

On June 12 and 13, 2004 the Chamber will host the annual EMPOWER "GLBT Community Celebration and Exposition" at the George R. Brown Convention Center. The different elements of EMPOWER 2004 include merchandise and services in the Business Exposition, Health Fair, Home & Garden Show, Job Fair, Performing and Visual Arts, Pet area, Sports & Outdoors opportunities and much more. Enjoy two days of entertainment, demonstrations, relationship development and making new friends as you learn about those who are helping make Houston a better place to live and work. Our sponsors of this years EMPOWER events include Countrywide Home Loans, Echelon Magazine, G & Lesbian Rainbow Pages, Gay & Lesbian Yellow Pages, JP Morgan Chase, Out Smart Magazine, Planet Ford, Russell & Smith Ford, Shell Chemical Corporation, and The Houston Voice.

On June 12, 2004 Pride Committee of Houston, Inc and the Chamber will joint produce "Lift-Off – Our Launch into PRIDE" featuring a "Party with the Stars" event from 9:00 PM until 11:00 PM with local, regional and national celebrities and featuring Jai Rodriguez, the "Culture Guy" from "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy". Tickets are on sale that include both days of the EMPOWER exposition, the "Lift-Off events and entrance into the dance party of the year called "Out of this World".

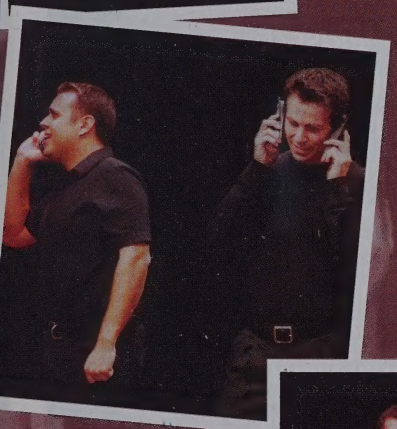
To learn more about Chamber events or to join the Chamber visit the web site at www.ghglcc.org or call 713-523-7576.

# 2003 Pride Cabaret

## MUSIC!

The collaborative effort of Troy Menn and Ken Williamson were the driving force behind the 2003 Pride Cabaret.

Thanks to last year's fabulous cast and crew for making the show a smashing hit!



## DANCE!

## SONG!

All photos courtesy of Yvonne K. Feece

# Pride As Big As Texas

## Houston's GLBT Pride Parade 2004

This year marks the 26th annual Pride Parade. Our parade has lasted through all of the modern GLBT history in the Southwest of the United States to grow into the largest Pride event in our region. In the early days the Parade was a great undertaking just to get the street closed and raise the money for a permit. Actually, one year the Parade was only on one side of the street. As years passed on, the traditional Sunday afternoon Parade took its toll. Houston's heat and humidity wore down spectators, we suffered a major political defeat in 1985 in a vote against nondiscrimination in city employment and a number of our people were sick due to complications of AIDS.

Yet we are resilient, as a community we worked together. No matter what happened to us we seemed to be able to pull together every year to assemble a celebration of who we are. Our Parade has always been that symbol.

GLBT people were people of the night. So in 1997, after a lot of study and debate we decided to do a night Parade. This was our Phoenix of rebirth. We were able with music and light to express whom we are. And that expression shows our many different faces of a community.

The Parade serves every year as a renewing of our commitment of a people who have been discriminated against. We see hope. We see that we are not alone. We see that we have friends both within the community and from our non-gay friends.

We invite you, your friends and family to come to the neighborhood on Saturday evening, June 26 and help us celebrate. We celebrate all our community. We celebrate the work of everyone who volunteers in our community. We celebrate the journey we all made in being who we are. And we remember everyone who we lost be it by violence, by AIDS or other medical condition, or by not having self worth.

## 2004 PrideParade Awards

ARIA

Best creative sound

FABULOUS

Best costumes

RAINBOW

Best overall lighting

RUBY SLIPPER

Best walking unit

PRISCILLA

Best float (non profit organization)

PINK DIAMOND

Best float (for profit organization)

STONEWALL

Best social commentary

JUDY GARLAND

Best performance

SPIRIT OF MONTROSE

Best entry

PRIDE AS BIG AS TEXAS

Best interpretation of theme

JUDGES CHOICE

For entries not fitting in other categories

# PRIDE

## AS BIG AS TEXAS

Saturday, June 26, 2004
8:45 - 11:00 pm, on lower Westheimer
Between Woodhead and Whitney
Be a part of the nation's original nighttime parade!

Here are a few suggestions to make everyone's pride more enjoyable...

1. Drink plenty of water. Houston in June is very hot, even at night.

2. Get there early. We recommend that you take some time to find the spot that is best for you.

3. Walk, take public transport, carpool. Parking can be scarce in the area on Parade night and the traffic leaving can be heavy.

4. Respect the neighbors. Help keep Montrose the unique, friendly, beautiful neighborhood it is. Please do not park on lawns, block driveways, or disturb the neighbors. You can also show your respect by using a trash can.

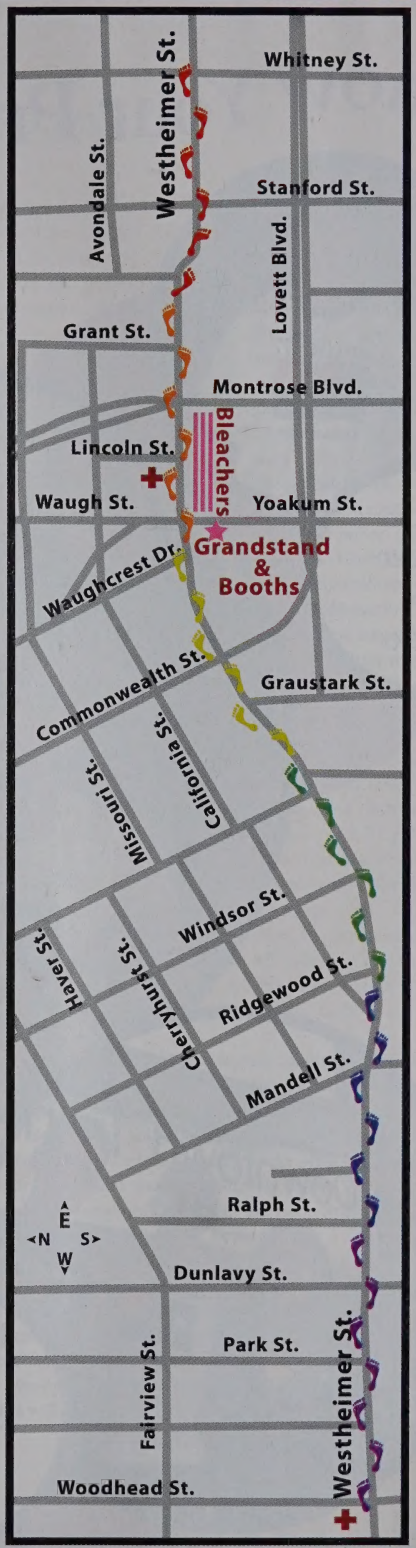
5. Dress light. Don't know what to wear? Why not try a new Pride as Big as Texas T-shirt or tank top!

6. Keep the pets at home. Sure your pet has Pride too, but a crowd of 150,000 might scare the GLBT right out of Fluffy!

7. Don't worry, be happy. If you encounter any problems please let one of the many volunteer parade marshals along the route know.

8. Invite everyone. Pride celebrates our diversity and the Parade just isn't the same without it.

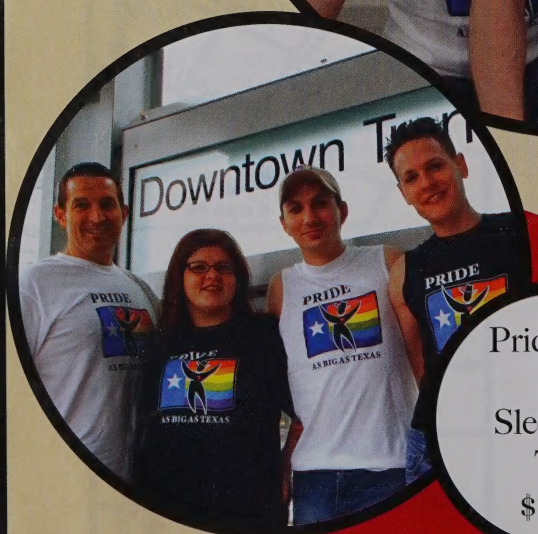
9. Play it safe! This may be Montrose, but you're still in a big city! Don't ruin your celebration by becoming a victim of crime. Call 911 if there is trouble!



# Show Your Pride!

Pride Ringer Tee
$16.00

Pride Baseball Cap
$22.50




Pride Tee & Sleeveless Tee
$15.00

Order Online at pridehouston.org

# Winds of Change

## The LGBT Political Climate in Texas by: RANDALL ELLIS

Over the past twelve months, the LGBT community in Texas and across the nation has achieved unprecedented progress in our struggle for equality. The United States' Supreme Court in Lawrence v. Texas declared that states could no longer demean the existence of LGBT Americans as it struck down the sodomy laws used by law enforcement to target and harass LGBT people. Soon thereafter Wal-mart announced, after years of staunch resistance, that it had adopted a policy to protect LGBT workers from discrimination in the workplace. The Capitol Area United Way of Austin followed with its announcement that it would no longer fund the Boy Scouts of America because BSA would not comply with the United Way's new non-discrimination policy covering sexual orientation. The momentum of change continued to escalate when the Massachusetts Supreme Court decided that the state of Massachusetts could no longer deny LGBT couples the right to marry. Back in Texas, openly gay Houston city council member Annise Parker was elected to the office of Houston Controller, representing two million constituents — the second largest number of constituents represented by an openly LGBT public official in the country.

'Take a step back from the eye of the storm and remember to focus on the current political landscape of Texas.'

Across the nation the winds of change have begun to blow in our direction and the marriage issue appears to have kicked up the most dust. Although the national debate of LGBT rights has centered on the issue of same-sex marriage, it is important that the Texas LGBT community take a step back from the eye of the storm and remember to focus on the current political landscape of Texas. As we craft the Texas "gay agenda" we must not forget that the Bible Belt runs deep through the heart of Texas, helping to secure the religious right's tight grip on the state's political ideology and our elected officials. Only one month before the United States Supreme Court announced its historic decision in the Lawrence case, lawmakers in Austin read from the Bible as they attempted to ban LGBT Texans from adopting children or serving as foster parents. The fight for marriage equality must not become a self imposed obstacle that sidetracks us from the issues where we have already made enormous progress.

We cannot and must not ignore the marriage issue. The religious right has for too long steered this debate with vicious rhetoric. At the same time, we must not let our advancements on other issues fall to the wayside. Currently, five school districts in Texas have recognized the importance of protecting LGBT youth from harassment and discrimination and enacted policies to ban this behavior. Five Texas municipalities have extended some form of protection to LGBT workers in the public and private sectors. With the passage of the James Byrd Hate Crime Act in 2001, gays and lesbians were recognized and protected by Texas law for the first time. These advancements were won with well thought out strategies, tailored to fit the local political climate. We must continue to build on these Texas victories as we plot our movement's course of action in the coming months.

Dallas, Houston, Austin, Denton and Hays County Independent School Districts have adopted policies to protect LGBT youth from harassment and discrimination. Numerous studies have shown that this type of protection reduces hostilities in the classroom and improves the learning environment for all students. As Texas lawmakers seek innovative ways to improve our public education system without increasing the tax burden on taxpayers, we must continue to push for safer schools as we tout the potential cost savings of non-discrimination in education policy. LGBT youth cannot be left out of the Bush mantra of "Leave No Child Behind."

Austin, Fort Worth, Dallas and El Paso have local non-discrimination employment ordinances that include sexual orientation, and Houston has protections in place for city workers based on sexual orientation. These pockets of progressiveness differ greatly from most of Texas, where one can be fired from her/his job simply because she or he is gay. Throughout this state, qualified, hardworking people are denied job opportunities, fired, paid less or otherwise discriminated against for reasons that are unrelated to performance or abilities, but instead due to sexual orientation, perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. With the demise of anti-gay sodomy laws, which criminalized homosexual activity, a new opportunity for advancement has emerged. Texas lawmakers can no longer cite Texas Penal Code 21.06, otherwise known as the Texas Homosexual Conduct Law, as an excuse to justify resistance to protecting LGBT Texans in the workplace. Denying LGBT Texans the fundamental right to hold a job and contribute to society stands in stark contrast to the rugged individualism and self-sufficiency that typifies the Texan's mentality. If we are to succeed, we must seize this opportunity and challenge the status quo with a message adapted to the Texas state of mind.

Texas has always reveled in its no-nonsense, tough-on-crime justice system. Lawmakers demonstrated this with the passage of the James Byrd Hate Crimes Act, which allows for enhanced penalties in crimes motivated by an anti-gay bias. Sadly, the transgender community was left out of this legislation. If we are truly to create a safer place for all Texans, we must endeavor to expand our hate crime legislation. We must take advantage of the tough-on-crime attitude in the Lone Star State as we work to create a safer place to live for all Texans.

Given the current political climate in Texas, these goals will not be accomplished overnight. We must remember, though, that none of our victories have come easily. The tenacity of the Texas LGBT community and the commitment of courageous lawmakers have gotten us where we are today. If our community remains focused and thoughtful in how we engage those who oppose equality, nothing will be able to hold us back and the victories will continue. ▼

# Gay Myths

## Exposing the Myths behind the stereotypes by: SHARON FERRANTI

So we've all heard them. Those statements that make us wince. "All gay men are rich." "All lesbians wear flannel shirts." "All gay men are promiscuous." "All lesbians take a U-haul on their second date." We hate to hear people saying these things about us. "Myths!" we say. "Clichés!" We want the world to know we're not strange, we're not 'other.' Don't we? Certainly we want people to stop hating us. We want people to stop fearing us. So toward that end we want the world to know we're human and complicated and as varied in our choices and hopes and dreams as heterosexuals. But one can't overlook the fact that there's still a great deal that is seductive and fun about belonging to a subculture. There's a lot of ambiguity inherent in the subject of "the gay myth." Perhaps we'd like to keep the good stereotypes and weed out the bad ones. Here are a few of my favorites:

## Myth #1 – 'Which one of you is the woman?'

Ohhhh yeaaahhhh! You can hear it now, can't you? The shrieking! If you ask that of a lesbian couple, they both get mad. "Whaddaya mean, which one is the woman? We're both women! Just because I can handle a lawnmower doesn't mean I'm not a woman! Just because she cooks, and I don't, doesn't mean she's a woman and I'm not!"

If you ask that of two gay men, whichever one is even a little less butch flies off. "What are you saying? You saying I'm nelly? You saying I can't fix a flat tire? I don't work on cars because I don't HAVE to. That's what you pay mechanics for!" Etcetera, etcetera.

We get mad because it hooks into something primal; our very masculinity or femininity. We hear it from the cradle. Femme is normal for girls, butch is normal for boys. And there are a million factors that play into that cradle message. There are our parents, whether they're gay or straight, wanting us to be happy. And they know if we stick out in a bad way, we're going to struggle in the sandbox. If we're really really lucky, and we very rarely are, we have thinking parents who know they'd better arm us with lots of self-esteem so we can figure out a way to charm the world with our wit, our intelligence, our decency, or any other number of virtues. But most of the time our parents are just plain afraid for us. So they try to get us to change. If we can be "butcher" or "femmer," "play with this doll Sharon, not the truck" then we'll be safe and maybe happy. Forget the fact that our parents are afraid for themselves, too. That's another article entirely!

So we're distressed when the straight world assumes one of us is the woman or the man. At least . . . publicly we are.

What? What did she say?

Yes, you heard me. Privately, we sometimes like this butch-femme thing. Not all of us. But certainly more of us than a decade ago. It's tricky (pardon the pun). It's very bad for our subculture status. We don't want the hetero world thinking we want to be just like them. And we don't. Let me repeat. We really really don't. One would be challenged to find a self-respecting lesbian who wants to give up any of her hard-fought equality in the work place, or the world for that matter, by assuming some ancient role as "the little woman." But lately there's a lot more women throwing out those seventies and eighties ideas that it's somehow bad to want a partner who is more masculine or feminine than you are. Politics be damned. There's something, for some couples, sexy and right about the butch-femme dynamic. A lot of girls like to feel feminine and pretty because it's natural for them. A lot of girls like to pamper the feminine side of their mate. And they like the appreciation that comes with it. And I know I've heard gay men say the same things. Privately. Very privately. It's a gradual change with which we as gay people are not yet all that comfortable. But perhaps it's healthy. Perhaps we're moving toward a balance in our relationships based on factors which are intrinsic and natural for us, as opposed to playing roles which are socially or politically imposed.

## Myth #2 – 'With gay people it's all about sex!'

I hear this question inherent in the statements of even my most enlightened straight friends. It's especially in the presumptions that we'd sleep with just about any straight person if they were into it. Of all the myths I'd like to dispel, this is the one over which I would love to wave my magic wand. How many times do we have to say it? How many ways do we try to say it? We try to tell the straight world not to flatter themselves. "If I wouldn't sleep with a lesbian who looks like you, why would I sleep with you just because you're straight?" We try to ask the straight world to reverse the argument. "Look, sex is great, right? But you (you straight people) still have to eat dinner, pay the bills, plan vacations, discuss politics, and deal with the mother-in-law, right? I mean, she could be the sexiest women in the world and I'd still only sleep with her once if she was a conservative Republican." And they're always like, yeah, yeah, I seeeeeee. But then it comes back the very next time you're out with your straight friends and they introduce you to a new girl and tell you, "She doesn't know very many lesbians, so be cool." I'm like, what? What do you think I'm going to do? Grab her leg under the table? Please.

But here again I can't ignore the mythological ambiguity. We do love our gay sex. We do love our sexual freedom. And don't think for a second it's just the men. Sure, you see a lot more men attempting and sometimes succeeding with open relationships than you do women. But lesbians are serial monogamists. Lesbians love their U-hauls because we love to play house. And also because we as women are told from the cradle that we are the keepers of virtue. So we get married because we think that's "the right thing to do" if you're having sex. But then, when that itch to have wild, against-the-rules sex comes along, we have affairs, because it's risky, it's exciting, and it's "taboo." Then we get married again and start the whole pattern all over. Lesbians love sexual freedom, but they hate themselves for it. Just my little theory.

## Myth #3 – 'Gay men are youth-obsessed beauties who all have great taste and make tons of money.'

You'd have to be straight to believe this. The only way you could ever believe this to be true is if the only gay men you know are either in a magazine or on TV. I'm just as pleased as the next person that our images in the media are improving. I love to see gay men portrayed as the beautiful and successful people they sometimes are. But the media thing is backfiring. Instead of replacing the old stereotypes of closeted sissies we kept around for comic relief — images which caused decades of self-loathing — now we've got images of shallow body-builders who won't talk to you if your car is more than two years old. I'm one of those lesbians who surrounds herself with gay men. And every single one of them is looking for the same happiness I'm looking for. They want fulfillment in their careers. If they're making money, they're as worried about job loss as the next person. They get older, too, by the way. And they want a partner to love them. It's no easier for gay men than anybody else. They are not prettier. They are not richer. They are not immune to loneliness. They are as clueless about love as the rest of the human race. And there's no ambiguity in that.

## And finally, Myth #4 – (I won't be popular for this, but...oh well) 'Gay life is harder than straight life.'

When I got this assignment I was daunted. There are still so many gay myths, some of which I have avoided because I'm not sure they're really myths. I could devote my last paragraphs to a million misconceptions. We could tackle the "gay people don't have kids" thing. We could talk about the "lesbians have no fashion sense" thing. We could talk about lesbian bed-death but I'd have to put myself to sleep. There's a plethora. I'd rather attack the myth that all of us believe whether we're gay or straight. Because I think it's the most destructive of all.

I know one of my mother's worst fears about my being gay is that I will end up old and alone. She assumes that if I'm straight, I'll have kids, and kids are the antidote to loneliness. She's 67 and not married. So she's beyond thinking being straight guarantees a lasting marriage. But she's still got a great relationship with her kids and she knows we're going to be there with her and for her until the end. But she forgets how many straight people have straight children that don't talk to them. Having kids is no guarantee you'll have somebody by your side in times of trouble. Having kids guarantees you'll have kids until they or you are gone. And that's it. A relationship is work and luck and nobody's got the corner on the market of companionship.

And what about the "my parents hate me because I'm gay" thing? That's a good one that our community likes to haul out when we're feeling like life is harder for us than for them. We forget about how many parents disapprove of their children because they married the wrong person, or they're lazy freeloaders, or they're selfish or God knows how many other reasons. Queers don't have an unfair share of familial disenfranchisement.

Now don't freak out! I am not, I repeat not, saying that we don't have problems that relate directly to being gay. We wouldn't have so many people decorating those closets if it wasn't still a big deal in many ways. I'm just saying we all have to watch out for that quantification problem. We as a community have specific grievances which demand continued aggressive work politically and socially. Being queer doesn't make us second-class or any other garbage. But we don't have more problems than straight people. We have just as many problems as straight people. There's no sense wearing that "V" for victim. It's sooooo last year. And there's no sense seeing the straight world as the enemy.

So when you think about "the gay myth," or talk about it with our beloved straight neighbors, be clear and be honest with yourself and them. It's a lot more fun. We're moving forward just as is the rest of the world. We're figuring things out just in time for them to change before our eyes. So if we want to continue to integrate and celebrate and share our pride, as opposed to flaunting it, or forcing it, we have to have dialogue, not speeches. After all, if I might drag out just one worn but appropriate adage, it's the journey and not the destination.

Happy Pride! ▼

# A Day in The Life of . . .

Phyllis Frye - Transgender lawyer/activist
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http://members.aol.com/prfrye/

PRIDE: You have so many moments of your life for which you are recognized, acknowledged, and remembered. What are a few that stand out most to you?

PHYLLIS FRYE: I was thrilled that the local LGBT lawyer group (Stonewall Lawyers) named an annual award after me. I was also thrilled that the State Bar's LGBT Section and the national LGBT lawyer group (NLGLA) each gave me their highest awards. I was pleased several years ago that the Corpus Christi Pride Parade named me to be its first Grand Marshall. And I have been honored by similar honors from the largest TG groups and other national gay organizations.

But I have been most pleased with three particular events.

One deals with my relationship as a lawyer with my professional peers. To have the first TG law article to be published as an out TG lawyer (with co-author Katrina Rose) in the journal that is sent to every lawyer and judge in Texas is a "high" for sure. The State Bar of Texas has come a long way from back in the late 1970's when it invited gay-bashing Anita Bryant to its annual convention. Now the State Bar has an official nondiscrimination employment policy that includes LGBT, and I was central to that policy being adopted. In passing that provision, the then State Bar Board Chair likened me in his remarks to the Board as an "Atticus Finch" from the novel "To Kill a Mockingbird." I can ask for no higher praise.

I also include my accomplishments as a lawyer. During my thirteen years of criminal defense law, I know that I saved over two dozen innocent people from going to prison either via jury trial or from good investigation that persuaded the prosecutors to dismiss. And I know that I saved another several dozen who were guilty from prison time as felons because I was able to demonstrate that the prosecutors were overzealous in over charging or "piling on" when the infraction deserved mere county jail time.

In the area of transgender law, I pretty much invented many of the notions and arguments currently being used, such as name change with gender identification correction on the drivers license at the beginning of the transition. That is, a change of name without an accompanying correction of gender on the identifying document acts as an incomplete change of name. I have personally freed hundreds and hundreds of TG people in courts across Texas using these arguments — this is the ONLY law that I still practice.

Another such notion was using the Littleton court debacle and turning it on its head to get TG same-sex marriage in San Antonio. Go to my website at transgenderlegal.com and go to Littleton and click on Wicks for details.

And the other is to be accepted as an out TG in my neighborhood. When I transitioned in 1976, our home was vandalized often and obscene phone calls were made during the two major Christian holidays. Two months ago, I was elected without an opponent to serve as an officer of our 5000+ home civic association.

P: You've been married for over 25 years. Tell me a little about your spouse. How has your spouse been an inspiration and a source of support for your work? How did you manage to attain a legal same-sex marriage 25 years ago? What do you recommend to those seeking same-sex marriages now?

PF: Actually, it will be 31 years this coming June 23rd. My spouse and I became best friends before we fell in love. In my experience, love has highs and lows, and if the partners each experience a low at the same time and have no solid friendship to hold them together, then it fizzles. My darling is my bestfriend, and I am hers.

As to me being TG, she decided before we married, that if that was ALL that might be wrong with me, then she had a good deal.

As legally married people, we benefit from so many, many government and legal assumptions that I cannot even fathom — although I know as a lawyer — what gay couples go through to get just portions of the same protections.

Marriage for same-sex people is worth fighting for as a basic civil right. We must as an LGBT people, continue to fight for this right. I say LGBT rather than LG because many BI folks and TG folks are in LG relationships that they would like to have the marriage benefit. So it is an LGBT struggle. The media needs to be told this. For more details go to my website at transgenderlegal.com and click on the Albany Law Review article on same-sex marriage.

P: When you first came out, I imagine you knew you'd be discharged from the military. What was the experience of your discharge like then? How were you treated by your fellow officers? Have you had to deal with the military at all since you completed the transgendering process (please forgive my naiveté as I'm not too familiar with the process aside from seeing the Christine Jorgensen Story). Did you receive any flack when you applied to use your GI benefits to get your law degree?

PF: I was outed by my first spouse as she was leaving me in Germany to return to the states and file for divorce. Luckily, I had a regular army commission and was a federal ROTC scholarship recipient. When they tried to discharge me, I told them if I did not get an Honorable, that I would go to the press and embarrass the military.

It was all such a waste of government funds. The Army had paid for four years of college and gotten only 14 months of service because of their own transphobia. I was a good officer and would have continued to be so.

My tour of duty was during Vietnam and I was glad to be assigned somewhere else for sure. That Clinton avoided the draft and Bush went National Guard does not bother me. What bothers me about Bush is that it seems that he shirked even that duty and now is being such a hypocrite Christian liar about it all while he meanwhile trumps up a war and sends people off to die so that he can run around on an aircraft carrier in a flight suit.

I used the GI Bill to buy my house and to go back to college for an MBA and law degree. The government, therefore, paid for all four of my college degrees and made me the lawyer that I am to stir up so much trouble. Funny, isn't it!

P: In your opinion, what are some ways society has taken steps forward in terms of LGBT issues over the past decade? Are there any ways society has taken a step backward? What are you most happy to see in terms of public perception/treatment of the LGBT community? What are some changes you want to see most?

PF: Let us be completely frank on the positive changes that have occurred. These have occurred for only one reason: LGBT people have come out to family, friends, employers and to elected officials. There is no other way.

Having said that, I am very optimistic that our civil rights will continue — if we continue to be out and proud.

Oh, of course a backlash is coming. But so what! The bigots can holler all they want, I will be free, because I want to be free. And so will you if you are out, proud and willing.

I think it is highly amusing that the Supreme Court that crowned King George in 2000 is the same court that gave us the Lawrence decision. Have you noticed that none of them have retired during King George's first term in office? Could it be that they each realize what a mistake they made in crowning this guy?

P: What do you love most about being Phyllis R. Frye? What do you love most about your life and being alive? What gets you up in the morning? How do you want to be remembered?

PF: I enjoy my life because I am the very who that I am. I am true to myself, I have a very best friend, and I make a difference in people's lives. And I finally have the time to enjoy the muse of music (via singing with my guitar) that I was certainly born with.

How do I want to be remembered? As someone who crashed open the barricades and held them open while others came through. But even more so, as someone who taught and encouraged others to crash open other barricades as well. The barricades are to freedom, of course. I guess you could call me a PROUD LIBERAL!

- ED

Pride Week 2004
Interfaith Worship Service & Community Reception
"Be the Love"
A celebration featuring Dr. Louie Crew
Sunday, June 20 7:00 PM at Bering Memorial UMC
For details contact:
713-812-9014 •or• rmarr@netropolis.net
Sponsor: Houston's Interfaith Alliance for Inclusiveness
"That all might live in loving community"

# Love Knows No Boundaries

## But the Government Does by: ERIC A.T. DICKMAN

Immigration law. For many of us who were born U.S. citizens, what goes on between the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS—formerly the Immigration and Naturalization Service or INS) and immigrants is unknown. We assume a little and move on to the next thought. "Sure, it's probably a little difficult to get into the U.S., but we're a country of privilege; you've got to earn the right to live here; but I'm sure it's a fair enough system . . ." What few of us ever hear about is the discrimination gays, bisexuals, transgenders, same-sex couples, and those living with HIV and AIDS have to deal with. Obviously, the U.S. does not recognize same-sex couples for the purposes of immigration, as it generally does for heterosexual married couples. There are fifteen major countries on the globe that do. Even Germany, a country we historically stereotype as a nation of intolerance and hatred, recognizes same-sex couples for immigration purposes. Immigration law bans the HIV+ from immigrating into the U.S., with very few exceptions. (There must be a spouse, child, or parent who is a citizen or permanent resident to be eligible for a waiver, which is often not the case for GLBT's.) Also, the number of successful cases wherein a GLBT has fled to the U.S. for asylum due to sexual orientation-based discrimination is small.

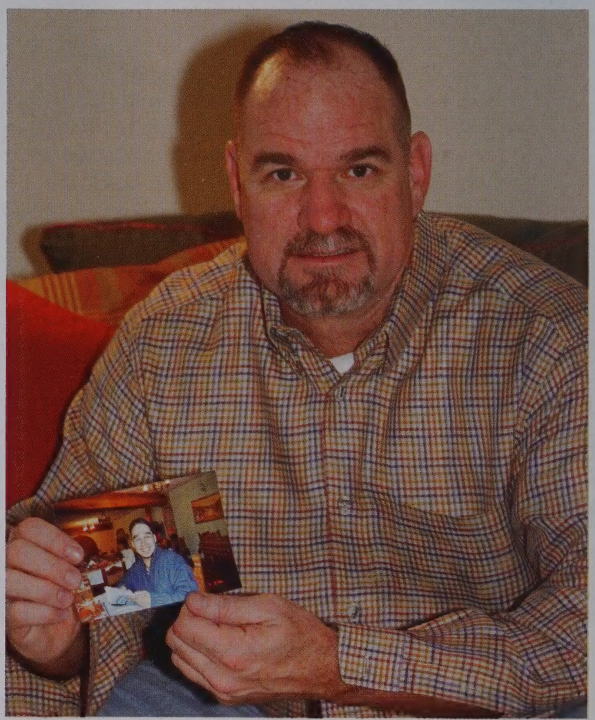
For Justin Blane Smith and Frank Castellanos, the procedures of the USCIS play a role of their daily life.

Castellanos was born in Caracas, Venezuela, April 21, 1968 and grew up there and in Valencia (an industrial city west of Caracas). After receiving his degree in Caracas, he worked in the media. Journalism, producer of TV and radio, creative director and columnist, you name it. He was a mixed-media jack-of-all trades. Additionally, he managed and was chef of his own restaurant. Castellanos decided to move to the U.S. and succeeded in entering the media here, working with companies including Liberman Broadcasting, 4 Communications (which publishes El Dia Newspaper in Houston) and Radio Unica, Inc.

Smith grew up in infamous Vidor, attended high school there, then moved to Beaumont to attend Lamar University, getting his Bachelor's degree in Graphic Design in 1983. For the past fifteen years, he's worked at the Houston Chronicle as Creative Supervisor in the Creative Services Department of the Marketing Division.

Castellanos and Smith met over a year and a half ago at a birthday party that a mutual friend threw for his partner. "I had a date at the same party with another person," says Castellanos (by e-mail from Venezuela), "but I do like better my big musclebear — LOL!" "We discussed common interests," explains Smith, "the advertising field, media, music, the U.S. Open tennis tournament, and Houston Texans football." Later that week Smith invited Castellanos to attend a social hour sponsored by a Hispanic business organization. They were a couple almost instantly.

Then on November 16, 2003, Castellanos was on a business trip in McAllen, Texas working for Radio Unica's Health Fair. He decided to join a friend on a leisurely trip across the border into Reynosa. "I was a big stupid! It was for candies and souvenirs," he recalls. "I crossed the border without a passport." When he returned four hours later, goodies in hand, he had nothing but his driver's license to get back into the country. He did not have his passport and visa. The border officer fit the male Latino homophobic stereotype. "He was a Latin guy, with too much attitude. He was dry and short with us and hostile to my friend."



Justin Smith holds a photo of his boyfriend Frank Castellanos

Castellanos is sure that the fact that the two of them being openly (and noticeably) gay inspired the officer to act out of intolerance, making the situation as difficult as possible. Castellanos was denied reentry into the U.S.

Since then, Castellanos and Smith have been speaking with attorneys and organizations to get him back into the country. It's a difficult and many-layered process to say the least. Although his passport and tourist visa are in order, Castellano does not have a stamp from the border going into Mexico, which raises a bureaucratic issue. Without a stamp entering, how can he get a stamp to exit? To worsen conditions, the company he contracted for a "special work number" to work in the U.S., Latinpro (now Latpro) assigned him an incorrect number and illegal paperwork with fraudulent information. Without knowing it, he was working illegally for Radio Unica. The only group that is helping him with this issue is the Ministry of the Exterior in Venezuela. Then

there's an even bigger issue at stake. The USCIS is contained within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Since, "Venezuela is a country on the terrorist's list of the Bush administration," as Castellanos explains, the only thing that will get him back in the U.S. is "a good, honest, and cheap lawyer. Or a miracle." So far, the frustrated Smith has not obtained assistance from any organizations in the U.S. ". . . people should not be denied their dreams of pursuing a better life if they work hard and are a productive part of society." Castellanos may be able to return in the Fall of 2004, or maybe in five years, "or never!"

In the meantime, Smith and Castellanos keep up with each other, mainly through technology. "We talk almost three times daily," says Castellanos, "and we e-mail each other almost every single day." Needless to say, it has been rough on both, who express confusion and sadness at the predicament. Smith has managed to visit his partner in Venezuela; however, once for New Year's, and plans to visit again in March. "I miss our togetherness," says Smith, "just hanging out, going to the grocery store, or watching favorite TV shows and movies. He's my best friend and we are never at a loss of words."

Both hope to see Castellanos return to the U.S. and continue their lives together and—if another U.S. policy changes—become a legally recognized married couple. Castellanos is hoping to gain legal residency here. From there, he plans on building an organization to help gay people with immigration issues, "and a serious gay magazine for the Hispanic target." If legal marriage is out of the question, Smith is sure they will in the very least become, "even more committed and better friends than ever!" ▼

## If you are in need of help regarding a partner's or personal immigration issues, there are a number of groups that may be of assistance. Here are a few that can help.

### American Civil Liberties Union Lesbian/Gay Rights & AIDS Project

www.aclu.org

Self-described as "our nation's guardian of liberty," the ACLU strives to preserve the rights and liberties of everyone protected by the American Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Founded in 1920, the ACLU works through education and litigation to defend rights such as freedom of speech, separation of church and state, racial equality, lesbian and gay rights, the right to privacy, reproductive freedom, immigrants' rights, and others.

### Stonewall Law Association of Greater Houston

www.slagh.org

Founded in 1990, this is an educational and networking resource for law professionals and others interested in legal issues that affect the GLBT and HIV/AIDS community. As a member of the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association, an affiliate of the American Bar Association, it provides continuing education for practicing attorneys looking to learn more about these issues. The group also provides a number of networking and community involvement opportunities; for example, they hold mixers every second Wednesday at Meteor (2306 Genessee, 6-8 pm), they provide an education and referral service to people with HIV/AIDS through the Southeast Texas Legal Clinic (3400 Montrose, Ste. 233, 713-523-7852), and host official Pride events and participate in the Pride parade each year.

### Lesbian & Gay Immigration Rights Task Force LGIRTF-Houston

www.lgirtf.org

E-mail: sdryam@houston.rr.com

Now in its tenth year of service, this group is changing its name to Immigration Equality. The new name better reflects its mission to inclusively reach equality in immigration treatment of all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or HIV status. Founded as a group of volunteers in New York, LGIRTF/Immigration Equality is a coalition of attorneys, activists, and immigrants who dedicate their lives to challenging immigration laws that discriminate against the GLBT community and immigrants living with HIV/AIDS. Their chief tools of defense include education, outreach, advocacy, and a nationwide resource network. In addition to Houston, they have chapters throughout the country and another in Amsterdam.

### Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund South Central Regional Office

www.lambdalegal.org

This national organization is committed to securing full recognition of the civil rights entitled to all GLBT and HIV/AIDS affected people through education, public policy work, and impact litigation.

### National Center for Lesbian Rights

www.nclrights.org

A national legal resource center, the NCLR aims to advance the rights and safety of lesbians and their families and everyone else in the GLBT, HIV/AIDS community. The group provides free legal counseling and advice, public policy advocacy, education, litigation, and otherwise.

# Discreet

by: KEN DONNELLY

**Discreet (di-skret') adj.** 1. Having a judicious reserve in one's speech or behavior; prudent. 2. Term used to describe a GLBT person who is not quite out of the closet.

There is a growing phenomenon in the GLBT community; the use of the term "discreet." Everyone has met a person who uses it. "I am discreet at work." "I am a looking for discreet connections." "I am gay but I am discreet." But why are they defining themselves this way? Moreover, is this a healthy behavior? The answer is not simple.

## Homophobia

The main driver behind the label is internalized homophobia: self-hatred for being GLBT or at least its stereotypes. The current conservative social climate only helps to perpetuate this behavior. According to Chris Kerr, Program Coordinator for the Montrose Counseling Center, who has directed several "Coming Out" groups at MCC, the University of Houston and the Kolbe Project, internalized homophobia forces many to remain completely "closeted" or "discreet." He notes that society fears homosexuality because it is different. Myths that GLBT people are promiscuous or overly nelly/butch or one of the other stereotypes are learned at an early age. One "discreet" man put it this way, "Why would I ever bring home a guy to meet my parents? I am not going to have sex with a guy in the middle of the living room in front of them!" This homophobia also manifests itself in other ways. States Kerr, "Anything beyond, 'Gee isn't it wonderful that people are free to be who they are,' is internalized homophobia." That's why Kerr thinks that events such as the Pride Parade are good for the community. There is such a variety of people represented just being themselves. Unfortunately even positive events such as the Pride Parade can trigger internalized homophobia, as a person focuses on every negative stereotype that justifies their fears.

## Fight the System

There are plenty of outside forces at work to help perpetuate this self-loathing cycle. Discrimination is still a very real danger to "out" persons. Systematic intolerance at work, in social situations, in political institutions and within our families punishes diversity and rewards uniformity. People lose jobs, are denied health benefits, have no surviving partner rights to property and insurance, and are even disowned by their families because of their sexual orientation. As another discreet individual stated, "My family will disown me if I come out. They won't understand."

The current arguments against gay marriage highlight systematic intolerance in politics. Instead of celebrating committed relationships, laws such as the Defense of Marriage Act are passed in reaction to perceived threats to heterosexual marriage based on GLBT myths. However, since it is already ingrained in our collective psyche that we are bad, justifying our wickedness by allowing marriage would make it worse. Systematic intolerance will not allow for a marriage not made of one man and one woman.

## The Down-Low

In minority populations, fear of being identified as GLBT is even stronger. Stated one African-American lesbian, "There are no gays in our community. Being gay is a white person's disease." As a result, being discreet manifests itself in a different way, "Getting It on the Down-Low." African-American, Hispanic and Asian communities have a narrower definition of gender roles, with a patriarchal dominance. As one minority woman stated, "A woman is supposed to be there for her man to advance our community." In her community, a lesbian is not just letting down her family but her entire race. For men it's a bit different. "It's okay for me to have sex with another guy as long as I am the top," stated one Hispanic male. In some cultures, only cross-gender people are considered gay while the men who have sex with them are not. Because gender roles are being confused with sexual orientation in these communities, being discreet is the only way they can live in both worlds.

> "Internalized homophobia forces many to remain completely 'closeted' or 'discreet.' "

## The Perfect Gay

Another myth that causes so many problems is that of the Perfect Gay. Kerr points out that this myth perpetuates the idea that a healthy GLBT person is one who is completely comfortable with his or her orientation and out to everyone. This fuels the misconception that if you are not completely out then you are bad. GLBT leaders have called for everyone to come out so the community can be visible and politically viable. However, Kerr reminds us that even the most out person decides to whom they will express their orientation. "You don't go up to every stranger and tell them."

Instead of perfection Kerr says we should strive for "congruence"; the point where your feelings match your actions. Most counseling, he notes, is dealing with this lack of balance where people are out in one part of their life but not in others. People who fall into this mismatched state, such as a discreet person, spend enormous energy trying to keep up their cover. "The more you are out the easier it is on you," states Kerr. He also notes that for some being "discreet" is perfectly fine as long as they are in congruence. "There needs to be balance."

## Balance Point

Openly GLBT people are often frustrated or even hostile toward discreet individuals. As one women stated, "I came out. So should they! I have no patience for them." Many feel that discreet people are benefiting from the accomplishments of other GLBT people who came out while avoiding the negative consequences. Kerr cautions that what discreet people need is not shaming or pushing but rather encouragement to take the next step. Out individuals should be role models and explain the reality of being out. "In general their fears are greater than the reality of it."

In the end, though it is about each of us "coming out" toward healthy self-acceptance as a GLBT person. Observes Kerr, "I have heard hundreds of coming out stories, both good and bad, but no one has ever regretted coming out." ▼

# A Day in The Life of . . .

## Michelle Dean & Kelly Gilbert - Family

Please meet Michelle Dean and Kelly Gilbert, their three children, Ashley (15), Kyle (10) and Devyn (8), and their dog, Roxy, also referred to as their "smelly cat." They make up one of the most normal families in Houston.

Michelle and Kelly are both high school teachers, and while they are at work inspiring and motivating young minds, their children attend their respective Jersey Village schools, participate in extracurricular activities, laugh with their friends and consume too much sugar in candy form, but just enough to avoid stomach aches. In the evening Michelle, Kelly and the children gather around the family table to eat dinner and talk about their days, and afterwards they may watch television, surf the Internet, read books, pay bills or play with the family dog. At night the children tuck their homework away in their schoolbags, Kelly tucks Michelle into bed, and they all slumber beneath one roof to wake up the next morning refreshed to live another day.

Their story begins quite simply. "My mom found a girl named Kelly," recalls Devyn. Michelle and Kelly met each other while working at Jersey Village High School. For eight years their family has flourished as a loving one, full of understanding and openness. On March 15, 2002, Michelle and Kelly exchanged vows in Kellington, Vermont. (Kelly accidentally said the 16th of March. Well, someone has to forget the momentous dates in a marriage!) They assert that their marriage and family are normal, as do their children. Kyle has friends that do not care that his parents are gay and Devyn has friends who have heterosexual and homosexual parents. Ashley adds, "I am still a normal teenager only now with four parents instead of two. I am still accepted in school, and most of my friends know and are fine with it. I am happy that my life is the way it is and I wouldn't have it any other way."

We all know that not everyone in the world is so fortunate, as well as not so open to embrace something they do not yet understand. But what is there to understand? Michelle believes that "once you have a personal relationship with God, there's no way you can preach hate." Their involvement in and support from Community Gospel Church are an important part of their lives and their will to strive for the community.

On February 13th, Michelle and Kelly were one of about 30 couples to request a marriage license at the Harris County Clerk's office. There was no expectation to actually receive a license; there was only a purpose: to show the world that there are real people who not only desire and demand equality but who are willing to fight for it. Among the gas-masked, rabid protesters, the couples faced the government, the cameras, their families, friends and foes to simply further the fight for the right to commit to each other in the state's eyes.

Michelle and Kelly, just as you or I, want equality. They want to be recognized as the same as anyone, and they want protection for their spouse and children. They want you to know that, "in order to further our endeavors, we must encourage one another and be our own advocates, not our own enemies."

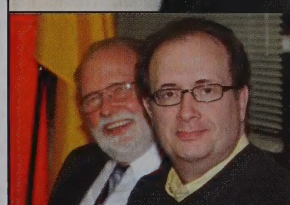
They are not different. They assert their existence in this world to be normal. They are not special, and yet they are. This family, along with many among us, continues to strive for the normal life they have already built and embrace, for the women and men before them who have done the same, and for you and I and the people that love us to encourage and support the human spirit.

-JG

PRIDE
AS BIG AS TEXAS

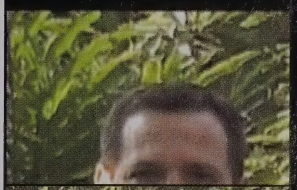
# 2004 Community Resource Guide

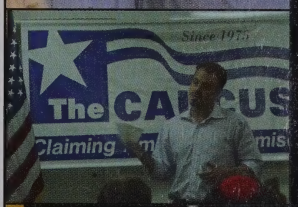
611 Club
After Hours www.kpft.org/afterhours.php
AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc. www.aidshelp.org
Alley Theatre www.alleytheatre.org
American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) www.aver.us
Art League Houston www.artleaguehouston.org
Bering Omega Community Services www.beringomega.org
BP America, Inc. Beyond Pride www.bp.com
Cabo MixMex Grill www.cabomixmex.com
Community Gospel Church www.communitygospel.org
Covenant Church www.covenanthouston.org
District D Council Office - Ada Edwards www.cityofhouston.gov
Donald R. Watkins & Young Men Saving Men www.ymsmhouston.org
Donald R. Watkins Memorial Foundation www.donaldrwatkins.org
Fitness Exchange www.fitnessexchange.cc
Front Runners home.swbell.net/marathon/houfr.htm
Gay and Lesbian Switchboard Houston www.gayswitchboardhouston.org
Gay Men's Chorus of Houston (GMCH) www.gmch.org
GoGirlsMusic.com www.gogirlsmusic.com
Gulf Coast Archive and Museum of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender History, Inc. www.gcam.org
Harris County Libertarian Party www.lptexas.org
Houston Buyers Club www.houstonbuyersclub.com
Houston GLBT Community Center www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org
Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents, Inc. www.hglp.org
Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus www.hglpc.org
Houston Humane Society www.houstonhumane.org
Houston Invitational Tournament www.houstoninvite.com
Houston Pride Band www.houstonprideband.org
Houston Voice www.houstonvoice.com
Inner Loop Alternative www.texasinvite.com
Integrity/Houston Interfaith CarePartners www.interfaithcarepartners.org
JP Morgan Chase Bank P.R.I.D.E. Team www.chase.com
Keys West www.keyswest.com
KPFT Pacifica Radio 90.1 www.kpft.org

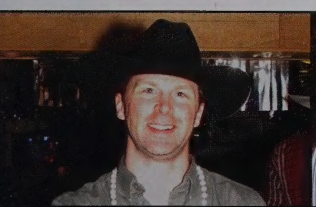


Photos by Yvonne K. Feece

Krewe of Olympus -TX, Inc. www.mardigrastexas.com
Lesbians Over Age Fifty (LOAF)
Log Cabin Republicans - Houston houston.logcabin.org
Lone Star Volleyball Association www.lsva.org
Maranatha Fellowship MCC www.maranathamcc.com
Meteor www.meteorhouston.com
Metropolitan Multi-Service Center
Monday Night Men www.texasinvite.com
Monday Night Women www.texasinvite.com
Montrose Clinic www.montroseclinic.org
National Leather Association Houston www.nlahouston.org
O Houston Nightclub www.houstono.com
Old Lesbians Organizing for Change (OLOC) www.oloc.org
OutSmart www.outsmartmagazine.com
Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays www.pflaghouston.org
People with AIDS Coalition - Houston www.pwach.org
Planned Parenthood of Houston and Southwest Texas www.pphouston.org
Pride Committee of Houston www.pridehouston.org
Prime Timers, Houston, Texas www.primetimersww.org
Q - Patrol
Q.Texas Magazine www.qtexasmagazine.com
HoustonQueerVoices www.queervoices.org
Rich's www.richs-houston.com
Ryan White Planning Council Office of Support www.rwpc.org
South Beach www.SouthBeachthenightclub.com
Stonewall Law Association of Greater Houston www.slagh.org
Texas Triangle www.txtriangle.com
The Center for AIDS www.centerforaids.org
The Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce www.ghglcc.org
The Kolbe Project www.kolbeproject.org
Theater LaB Houston www.theaterlabhouston.com







# "It's a culture thing . . ."

## A look into the diversity of the GLBT community

by: JOSEF MOLNAR

When Derrick Elliot came out of the closet in the 1970s, he looked forward to a world free of homophobia and racism. As a black man in Cincinnati, Ohio, he assumed the gay community would look past the prejudices they had experienced and try to correct them.

"I thought to myself, 'Nobody in the gay community is racist,'" he says. "It never occurred to me that they might be."

The club he wanted to attend still clung to a misogynistic and prejudiced atmosphere in which only white men could attend, and very little changed until a group of women filed a lawsuit to open the club to females. Soon, black people were able to attend, and like the straight world, the gay world began opening to minorities.

"It was like entering the promised land," he says, "We were so happy to go somewhere they had told us before that we couldn't."

> "It's enough of a concern to be a minority, and then to be another minority makes it worse."

The frequency and intensity of this kind of experience have fallen since then, but although the gay and lesbian community is increasingly welcoming minorities into its fold, many still find issues such as culture, religion and even native languages a barrier to that inclusion.

Abel Rodriguez, the president of Gays and Lesbians Organized by Orgullo (Pride), says that while many of the issues in the Spanish-speaking community are the same, outreach efforts still cannot tell many immigrants about health issues in the community, as well as the many gay-friendly clinics and services available to them.

"I see heavy advertising for services at other bars, but they also need to offer them in Spanish and English," he says. "There are some gay clubs where these services are not represented because they are Spanish-only bars."

Although white people make up a larger percentage of the community, Elliot, a Houston resident who is founding the local chapter of Men of All Colors Together, sees a lot that these minority communities have in common.

"In Houston, I see a particularly rich tapestry, but I also see minority groups set apart from each other," Elliot says. "Our respective communities almost never interact. We have so many things in our experience that are alike, and it seems like it would make sense if we came together to complement one another."

He wants his group to allow gay men—and despite the name, women can participate as well—to get together as friends and associates. Elliot says the traditional view of the gay community still does not always recognize alternative cultures.

"That view is changing, but for the most part we fail to see a lot of diversity in the media, magazines, publications, and in videos," he says. "My hope is that all of us will grow in many, many directions, and one of the means of growth would be to include anyone."

The barriers to gays and lesbians are not just limited to the gay community. Gender roles also play a large part in some traditional cultures, where men play active roles in life and the bedroom, while women are expected to be more subservient. Gay men and women from these cultures still face these discriminations, especially in traditional close-knit families. Many gay men and women from these cultures have to give up everything to come out, losing not only their friends and families, but also their means of emotional support.

Women such as Janice Trinidad, a Filipino graduate student in Austin and the chair of Trikone-Tejas, an intercultural minority gay group, find themselves fighting the bias that exists within families still deeply rooted in religious or traditional mores. Although she says her family has gradually adjusted to her open lifestyle, they are still concerned about the social problems and misunderstanding she faces.

"This is not exactly an ideal lifestyle for our families," she says. "It's enough of a concern to be a minority, and then to be another minority makes it worse."

She says that although different cultures react differently, most generally disapprove of alternative sexual orientations and believe them to be a choice. In a close-knit environment where conformity is the norm, disapproval becomes a mandate to stay in the closet.

Even for people not immersed in their communities, family ties and the desire for acceptance run strongly in many gay minorities, so many groups create an atmosphere in which gays and lesbians develop ties which can appear more like families. The bonds created in groups like these help to make up for the lack of support from family and friends. Having the same language also bonds people from different countries.

"The Spanish bonds us together," Rodriguez says, "because wherever you're from, we all speak the same language."

GLOBO holds an annual posada in Houston each year the day before the Pride parade to celebrate their communities in a traditional way. Its annual Christmas posadas also emulate the traditional twelve days before Christmas.

"It's a cultural thing, and the people feel bonded to that," Rodriguez says. "These are cultural things we need to keep and not lose." ▼

Bar Guide Courtesy of the Houston Voice

# HOUSTONBARMAP

1. **611 Hyde Park** ♂ ⌂ 🛏 611 Hyde Park • 526-7070
2. **Briar Patch** ♂ 🚶 2313 Crocker • 523-7616
3. **Bricks II** ♂ 🎭 ⌂ 🛏 617 Fairview • 528-8102
4. **BRB** ♂ ♀ ♫ 🎭 🚓 2400 Brazos • 528-9192
5. **Chances/GSpot** ♂ ♀ ⌂ 1100 Westheimer • 523-7217 • chancesbar.com
6. **Club Inergy** ♂ L 🚀 ♫ ⌂ 5750 Chimney Rock • 666-7310 • clubinergy.com
7. **The Club Houston** ♂ 🚶 2205 Fannin • 659-4998
8. **Rainbow Room** ♀ ♫ 📼 🛏 1417-B Westheimer • 522-5144
9. **Club Xscape** ♂ ♀ L ♫ 📼 🚓 2612 S. Richey • 944-7663
10. **Cousins** ♂ 🚀 🛏 817 Fairview • 528-9204
11. **Decades** ♂ ♀ 🚶 ⌂ 1205 Richmond • 521-2224
12. **EJ's** ♂ 🚀 ♫ 🛏 ⌂ 2517 Ralph • 527-9071
13. **Guava Lamp** ♂ ♀ 📼 🚶 2159 Portsmouth • 524-3359
14. **JR's** ♂ ♀ 📼 🚶 808 Pacific • 521-2519
15. **Keys West** 817 Dallas • 571-7870
16. **Mary's** ♂ ♀ 🚶 🎭 🚀 ⌂ 1022 Westheimer • 527-9669
17. **Meatrack** ♂ 2915 San Jacinto • 528-2028 • meatrack.org
18. **Mela's** ♀ L 🚓 302 Tuam • 523-0747
19. **Meteor** ♂ ♀ 📼 2306 Genesee • 521-0123 • meteorhouston.com
20. **Midtowne Spa** ♂ 🚶 3100 Fannin • 522-2379 • midtowne-spa.com
21. **Montrose Mining Co** ♂ 🎭 📼 🛏 805 Pacific • 529-7488
22. **Michael's Outpost** ♂ ♀ ⌂ 🛏 🚀 🚓 1419 Richmond • 520-8446
23. **0** ♂ ♫ 📼 🎭 🛏 710 Pacific • 523-0213
24. **Ranch Hill Saloon** ♂ ♀ 🚓 🚶 211 Airport Rd., Conroe • 936-441-6426
25. **Rich's** ♂ ♀ ♫ 🚀 📼 🚶 2401 San Jacinto • 759-9606 • richs-houston.com
26. **Ripcord** ♂ 🎭 📼 715 Fairview • 521-2792 • theripcord.com
27. **South Beach** ♂ ♀ ♫ 📼 🛏 810 Pacific • 529-SOBE • southbeachthenight-club.com
28. **Toyz** ♀ L ♫ 🚀 📼 5322 Glenmont • 668-4892
29. **Viviana's** ♂ ♀ ♫ 🚀 🚶 5219 Washington • 862-0203

**Codes**

- ♂ men
- ♀ women
- L Latino/a
- 🚀 drag shows
- 🎭 leather/levi
- 🤠 Western
- ♫ dancing
- 🚶 live entertainment
- 📼 video
- 🕺 dancers
- ⌂ neighborhood

HOUSTONPRIDE.ORG

Happy Pride!

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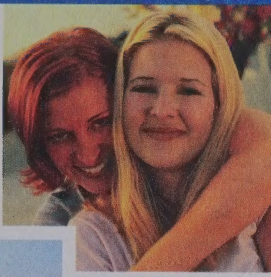

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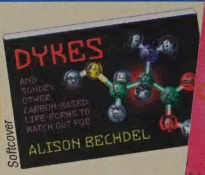
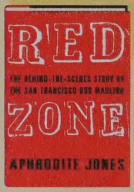
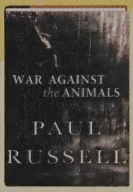



Favorite lesbian comic
**04-9218**
Pub. ~~$13.95~~ **$1**

Gay sex guide
**07-0354** Pub. ~~$13.95~~ **$1**



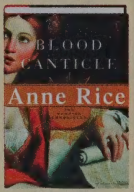

Tragic dog mauling
**90-0673** Pub. ~~$24.95~~ **$1**



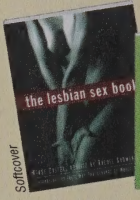

Emotional gay novel
**37-5861**
Pub. ~~$24.95~~ **$1**

By Michael Thomas Ford
**37-5448** Pub. ~~$23~~ **$1**

Gay dating nightmares
**77-6665** Pub. ~~$14.95~~ **$1**

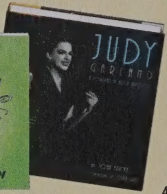



by Anne Rice
**33-3007** Pub. ~~$25.95~~ **$1**



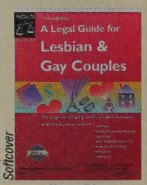

Revised and updated
**57-3676** Pub. ~~$21.95~~ **$1**

Favorite gay comic
**64-9214** Pub. ~~$13.95~~ **$1**




Lavish photo book
**97-7531** Pub. ~~$50~~ **$1**

Rainbow Boys sequel
**47-6520** Pub. ~~$16.95~~ **$1**




New edition
**25-9674** Pub. ~~$29.99~~ **$1**

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- GLAAD
- PFLAG
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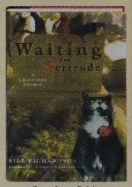
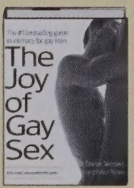
Hit British show companion
**40-8440**
Pub. ~~$15~~ **$1**

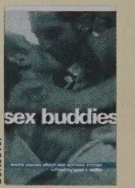



Purrfect G&L
cat mystery
**34-3535** Pub. ~~$21.95~~ **$1**



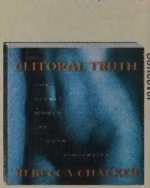

Newly revised
**97-4221**
Pub. ~~$24.95~~ **$1**

Campy gay fiction
**77-6119**
Pub. ~~$23~~ **$1**




Hardcore gay erotica
**37-5620**
Pub. ~~$14.95~~ **$1**

Lesbian summer romp
**17-7576**
Pub. ~~$23~~ **$1**




Exploring female anatomy
**11-7259**
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by Gregory Hinton
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**38-0529** ISO ~~$20~~ **$1**

Chicana lesbian novel
**68-0639** Pub. ~~$23~~ **$1**

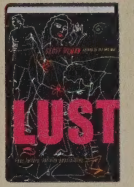
Softcover

Second *Queer as Folk* novel
**44-4494** Pub. ~~$13~~ **$1**

Moving transsexual memoir
**47-5656** Pub. ~~$24.95~~ **$1**

Softcover

Sex in sports
**07-1434** Pub. ~~$14.95~~ **$1**




Sexy gay fantasy
**64-9420** Pub. ~~$25.95~~ **$1**

Softcover

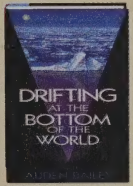
Queer pop culture surveys
**67-5615** Pub. ~~$14.95~~ **$1**

Softcover

High-voltage lesbian erotica
**21-8413** Pub. ~~$13.95~~ **$1**

Softcover

Episode companion
**48-0041** Pub. ~~$20~~ **$1**




Mythic lesbian novel
**72-0313** ISO $17.99 **$1**

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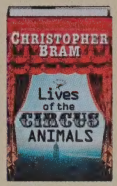
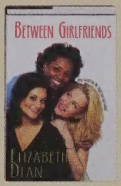
Pub. ~~$20.95~~

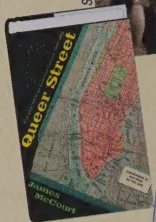
Hilarious 6th sense guide
**14-7579**
Pub. ~~$20~~ **$1**



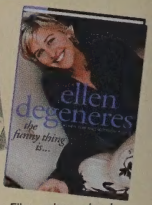

Gay thespian hi-jinx
**47-7411**
Pub. ~~$24.95~~ **$1**




Lesbian in the city
**37-6174**
Pub. ~~$23~~ **$1**

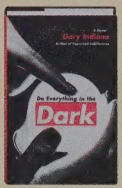



Gay Manhattan history
**78-0333**
Pub. ~~$29.95~~ **$1**

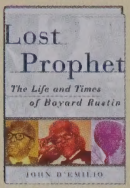



Ellen makes us laugh
**28-0454**
Pub. ~~$23~~ **$1**

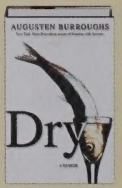
Hilarious bestseller
**18-0030** Pub. ~~$24.95~~ **$1**




by Gary Indiana
**47-8387** Pub. ~~$23.95~~ **$1**




Gay civil rights hero
**77-7430** Pub. ~~$35~~ **$1**




by Augusten Burroughs
**17-2765** Pub. ~~$24.95~~ **$1**

Steamy lesbian erotica
**53-3175** Pub. ~~$12.95~~ **$1**

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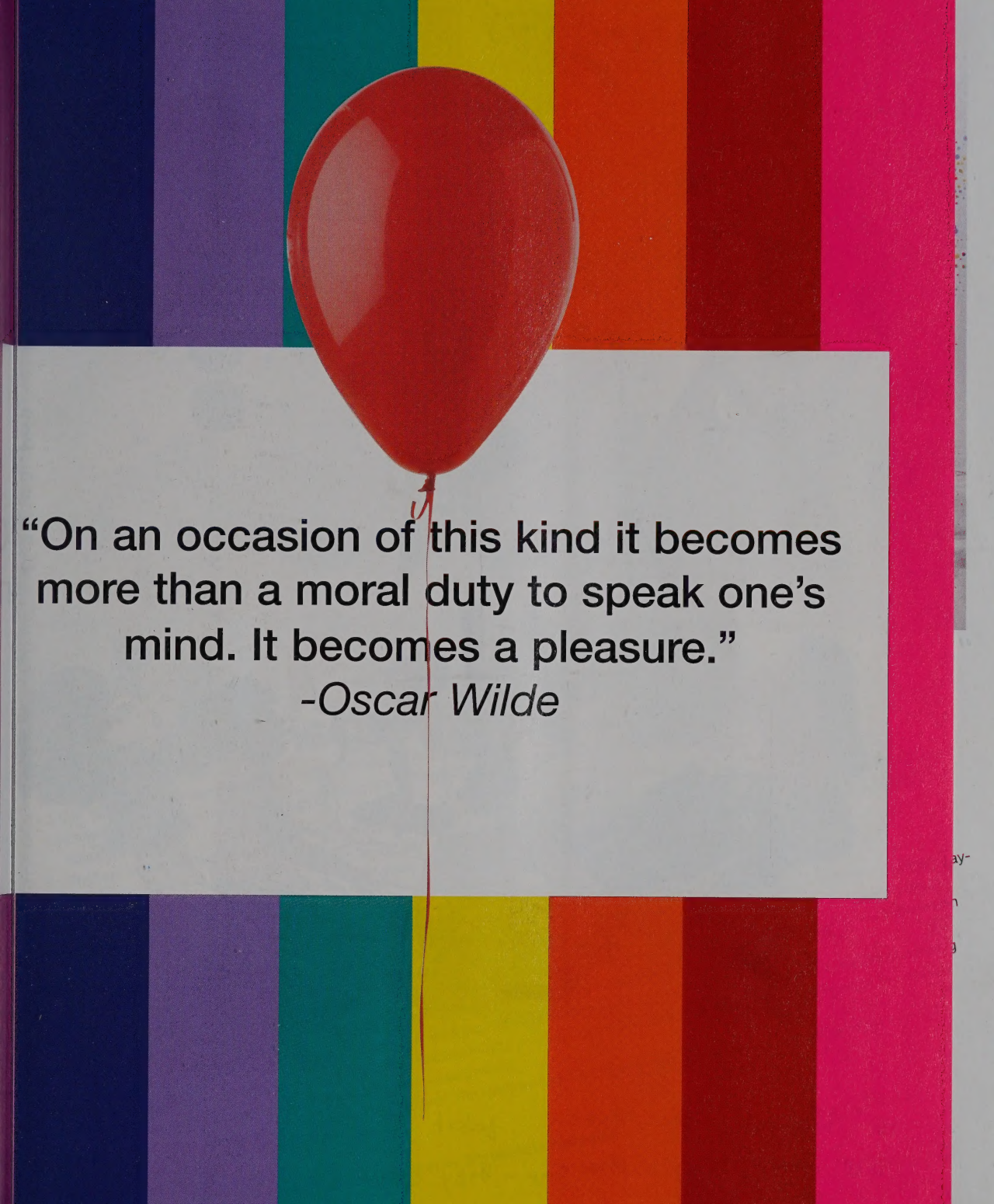

"On an occasion of this kind it becomes more than a moral duty to speak one's mind. It becomes a pleasure."
-Oscar Wilde

she, she (me) (me) (me)

a womyn among womyn....

in Alexander Mc Queen, jacket Fred Segal —
all. others. Gap - Mom Gap - Baby Gap! (dont you love it?) —
one stone for the whole family!!!

# Mrs. Tependris goes to Pride

Mrs Tependris, that woman of great virtue and quality who is obsessed with Chic and possessed by a monumental curiosity, Ambassador of Eccentricity and great doyenne of style, freedom and art, was born in Alexandria, Egypt.

When?

That we will never know, as her early past remains veiled in mystery...

What we do know is that her last wedding, to the great Greek tycoon (alas, tragically vanished) left her a multimillionaire. She divides her time between Arcadia, just outside of Los Angeles, and her favorite little palace, "the divine Tependrovsk" near St. Petersburg (Russia, that is).

Of course, she keeps houses in New York, Paris, Venice, the South of France and other places too numerous to mention.

An art collector, curator and artist herself, Mrs. Tependris is the ultimate unlimited person.

Nothing will stop her from defending the causes of peace, freedom of expression, art — and yes, gay rights! Certainly more than gay-friendly herself (in fact, a notorious Fag Hag) she is always accompanied to the chic-est of activities by her devoted secretary Pearl (about whom many rumors circulate, including that she was the last Sapphic priestess at a shrine devoted to Artemis in southeastern Russia, and/or she is a Brazilian transsexual) and her beloved poodle Pepe (perhaps history's nelly-est dog).

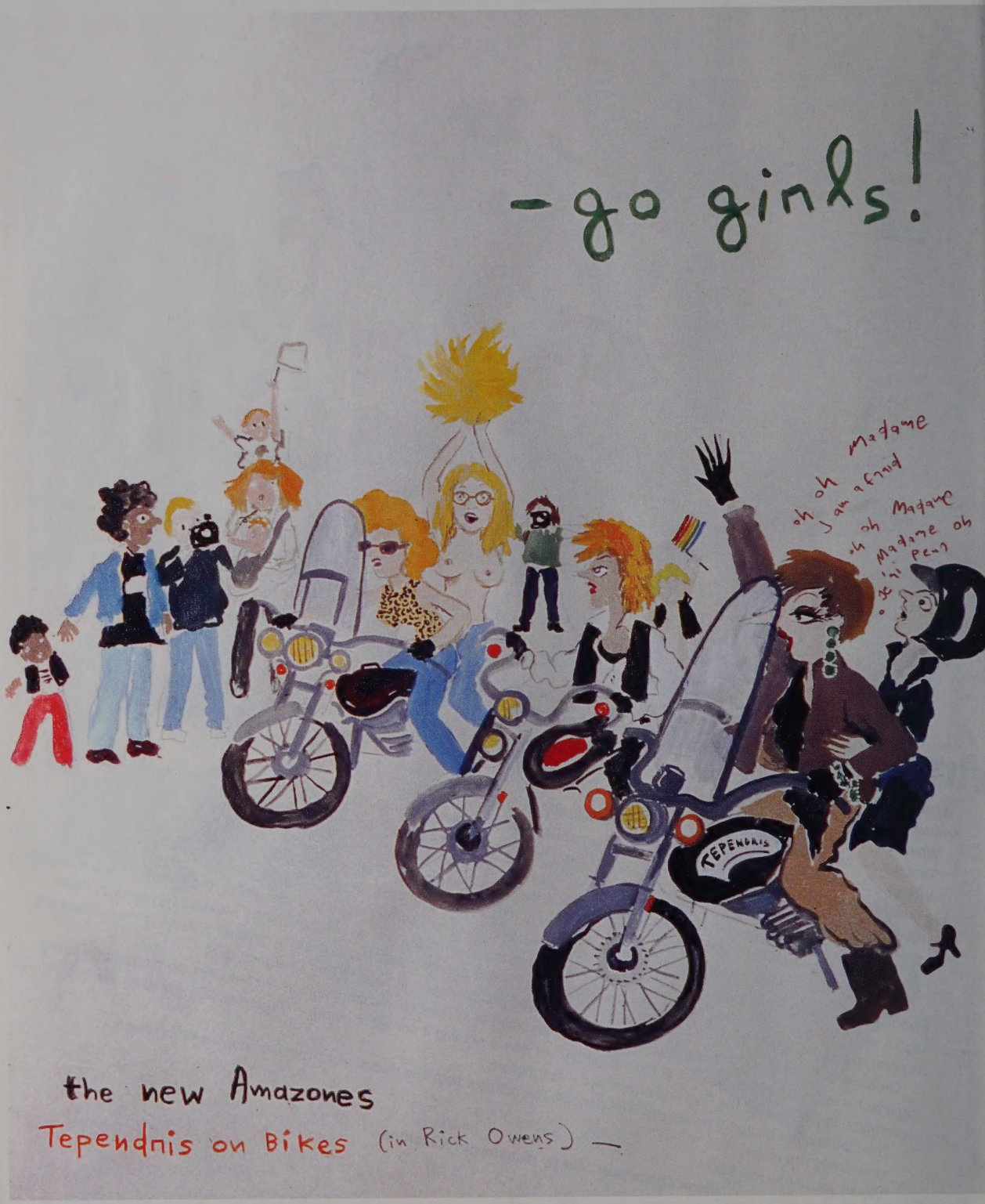
On her way home to LA from Athens — where she triumphed in all the Olympic competitions, winning 38 gold medals competing against herself, just before the start of the official Games (she is nothing if not avant garde) — Tependris was seized by the divine inspiration to join in all of the Gay Pride festivities – everywhere.

The clothes! The bijoux! The parades! The dances! The rainbow flag! The musclemen! The feathers! The camouflage!

How could she resist?

Would you like to join her?

**Illustrations and text by Konstantin Kakanias**




the new Amazones

Tependnis on Bikes (in Rick Owens) —

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by Jonathan Adler
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oh my, oh my
where am I?

# oh oh oh sweetie, this is a terrible mistake!!

—Hey you's cute, what's your name?

—this is not what j meant (leather goods)

— where is the nearest Gucci store?

Miss Tependris, in Gucci Fall 2004
(alas, alas. Tom Ford's last collection)

Men in Leather Men (Los Angeles), B 665 Leather (Los Angeles), Tuff stuff (Phoenix), Heaven Scent me (Denver), 80% straight (Honolulu), a Taste of Leather (San Francisco), Leather in exile (Houston) —

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# darling ho cell phones

this is a serious fashion shoot !!

Mrs Tepentin in Balenciaga
Fall 2004
Boys in Helmut Lang
Spring 2004
Bijoux JAR

chic and liBenated

a gay time shop a dream! a dream!

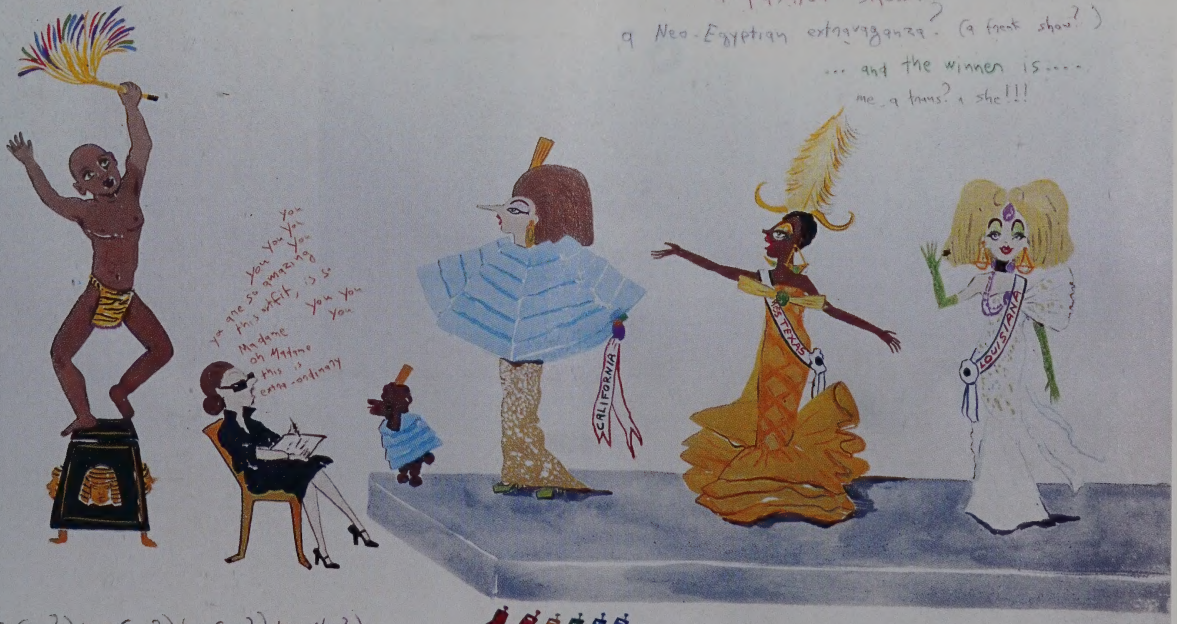
Mrs Tepentris in Balenciaga (Fall 2004)
"Service" in Helmut Lang - (summer 2004)

am j chic enough?

shoes by Christian Louboutin
dress JAR -

✱ 1 prize ~ fun set - RAINBOW CELL PHONE!!
- a collector item

a Miss Transamerican contest?
a fashion show?
a Neo-Egyptian extravaganza? (a freak show?)
... and the winner is....
me a trans? a she!!!




she (me?) me (she?) he (me?) me (he?)
as Cleopatra, Elizabeth Taylor, Claudine Colbert, Theda Bara, Vivien Leigh, Hetty Lamarr.....

all in Christian Dior Couture
By John Galliano
summer 2004
the perfect summer dress

# Fine Wine

Classic concerns — such as eroticism and politics — come to the forefront again, even as the term "Gay Art" becomes redundant. **Lawrence Schubert** reports...

**JOE SCHMELZER**
NOAH IN TUB
THREE PILLOWS

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Everything old is new again in the cultural time warp created by our current political climate. The tone is lighter in some areas, notably darker in others, the shock of September 11, 2001 simultaneously heightening and deepening the American response to life in general, fostering a more blasé attitude toward certain issues and a deeply impassioned response to others.

Gay politics, vividly exemplified by the nationwide frenzy of same-sex nuptials earlier this year, have after years of assimilation and gentrification returned to the forefront of American culture. Since the United States Supreme Court overturned the Texas sodomy laws last year, the so-called "gay agenda" is back in-the-face of the average Joe and back on the common table of the masses, dissected during dinner hour by everyone from Andrew Sullivan to Bill O'Reilly.

Conversely, gay art and artists, possibly chastened by the travails of Ellen Degeneres and Rosie O'Donnell, have soft-pedaled their social agendas in favor of a wider inclusion. With Bruce Weber's breezy, ambiguous sensuality now firmly entrenched in the vocabulary of advertising, homoeroticism has become a market commodity, while the influence of more confrontational artists such as Robert Mapplethorpe and David Wojnarowicz — cultural provocateurs of the Reagan era — has gradually shifted to the more oblique, benign, and sexless example of Andy Warhol. This is not a retreat into blandness as much as a retrenchment into something subtler, almost subliminal, and ultimately much more subversive. Except in the field of hardcore eroticism — which has always maintained its own, sometimes shaky podium, the term "gay art" is becoming an unnecessary redundancy.

There are no metrosexuals in Patrick Lee's portfolio. Lee's graphite portraits of blue-collar icons — fireman, soldiers, football players — delineate the old-fashioned virtues of untrammeled masculinity in a world before irony, postmodernism and Queer Eye for the Straight Guy. Despite the classical elegance and formidable breadth of his technique, Lee survived a brief, uninspiring stab at art school and is largely self-taught, inspired instead by a childhood diet of comic art by Boris Vallejo and Frank Frazetta. As Florenz Ziegfield glorified the American girl, Lee enshrines the American male, and there is more than a little anthropology in his objectives.

"I loved the technical precision of artists like Frazetta and Tom of Finland, but my outlook is totally rooted in reality," the artist comments. "I love blue-collar guys; I am fascinated by the whole male mystique and with male posturing, both straight and gay. I despise that whole 'metrosexual' movement. Rather than the best of two worlds, it gives us the lowest common denominator. It's still a man's world, but there are many new challenges to the primacy of the heterosexual male — gays and women primarily — but also to his position in the workplace. He's being uprooted and challenged. Men have a whole new set of issues to deal with. The times are redefining our view of masculinity; I'm just taking notes."

The strength, resolve and almost heroic quality of Lee's subjects creates a subliminal and not entirely unintended erotic tension in his portraits, but their formal elegance could pass muster in a boardroom, boding well for Lee's continued evolution as artist and anthropologist.

Two's company and three's a couple in the world of photographer Joe Schmelzer. With his life as his thesis and boyfriends Noah and Clate as his constant muses, Schmelzer balances his personal portfolio — an insightful, occasionally eye-opening examination of his domestic triad — with an unaffected sideline in commercial and corporate portraiture.

Upon graduating in 1995 from the Rochester Institute of Technology with a B.A. in Fine Arts, Schmelzer embarked on a career in magazine photography to find success but not fulfillment. Inspired by the sense of color and air of dislocation in photographs by William Eggleston, and Steven Shore, whose Uncommon Places he lists as a watershed influence, Schmelzer climbed into his car and headed west. He acquired a Masters of Fine Arts from the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, and then began the body of work for which he is most known: a documentation of his relationship and home life with two other gay males. In his commercial work, impatient with the machinations and ego-battles of Hollywood celebrity photography, Schmelzer eschews studio lighting and computer gloss in favor of an almost Dogme-style naturalism.

"I like to find people in their natural environments," Schmelzer relates, "then step back and give them room to breathe and move around."

There is plenty of breathing and moving around in Schmelzer's fly-on-the-wall examination of his own admittedly unorthodox home environment. In a situation ripe for exploitation, there is nary a whiff of Dude Dorm-ism or narcissism in Schmelzer's portfolio, only a meditative, wryly amusing and poignant examination of what seems to be a perfectly sane, grounded and normal relationship (albeit between three rather than two). Schmelzer's current one-man show, at the Western-Project in Los Angeles, riffs on the idea of "pairs of threes," with everything from three pillows on a bed to three tall trees in the forest, stand-ins for Schmelzer and the two saplings he shares his life and artistry with.

Pedro Palanca is an artist, ethnographer and foot fetishist located in the dizzying altitudes of Lima, Peru. In Palanca's oeuvre the sum of the parts is more than equal to the whole (and the hole as well). What Tom of Finland is to the crotch, Palanca is to the humble foot.

"Sole Brother #1," the artist's rendering of sexy bipeds, recalls R. Crumb's ubiquitous "Keep on Truckin'" dude, but with a dose of steroids enhancing his shoe size. Palanca finds his subjects — working men and laborers — in the streets of Lima, employing a mixture of surveillance and voyeurism to surreptitiously stalk and capture his prey on film. Working in graphite, colored pencils and ink markers on found, idiosyncratically patterned papers (cardboard beer holders, old calendar pages, graph sheets), there is a sweetness and innocence to Palanca's universe and the men who occupy it akin to the utopian vision of Tom of Finland, despite the graphic, hardcore scenarios that frequently define his drawings. ▶

In a supersized world, Palanca is really only applying current market standards to his erotic fixation.

Rodriel is an artist who works in situ, a transient artist inspired by transient muses. Think Jacob Riis meets Jean Cocteau, or How the Other Half Lives meets The White Paper. Tall, androgynous and quietly imposing, with a palpable resemblance to jazz legend Billie Holiday, Rodriel grew up in the South, lives in LA, and has experienced almost as much "strange fruit" as Lady Day in pursuing his artistic muse. Look at a drawing by Rodriel and the drawing looks back. His subjects are average men, nude and always rendered solo, singular in the amplification of their ordinariness. The artist encounters his muses in mundane locations — on the street, exiting bus stations, in coffee shops — places where one is permitted to linger, but only in passing. Burdened by periods of homelessness, Rodriel has surmounted obstacles that would dissuade a lesser artist; but with a one-man exhibition, "Some Men," last year at LA's Headquarters gallery, and the inclusion of two works in Hollywood's new Erotic Museum, he has seen an upswing in his fortunes. Which is not to say he has abandoned his old hunting grounds: If you encounter a tall, imposing, androgynous gentleman resembling Billie Holiday (sans gardenia) on Hollywood Boulevard who asks to do your portrait, two things are reasonably assured. You are talking to Rodriel (who has one name only) and you'll probably be nude within the hour.

David Crocker is a painter in the old-fashioned sense of the word. He works in oils or watercolors, on canvas, with a brush. Only in LA could something as traditional as painting on canvas be considered unusual, but among his peers Crocker is almost peerless. His delicately rendered paintings, both abstract and representational, have the layered, textured depth of an older sensibility.

Lesbianism is a fact of life for artist Alicia McCarthy, but not the raison d'etre of her art. An alumnus of the San Francisco Art Institute, McCarthy works in painting and sculpture, utilizing a variety of found objects as components, and found woods as her canvases. Though abstract in nature, McCarthy refers to her works as "landscapes," the harmony and dissonance inherent in nature underpinning her sensibility. Grounded in the same street-savvy sensibility as fellow Bay Area artists Chris Johansen, Barry McGee, and his wife, the late Margaret Killgallen, McCarthy quickly dismisses any highfalutin' art-talk explanation for her media of choice. "I'm just broke," she laughs. "I like discarded objects, things I'll find at construction sites or similar places, because they often bear the mark of someone else's work. I like to create content by recontextualizing objects." McCarthy has shown in group exhibitions at The Luggage Store, the Yerba Buena Center For the Arts and other San Francisco hot spots, and had her first solo exhibition at the city's Jack Hanley Gallery in 2003.

In contrast, lesbianism is both a fact of life for Emily Roysdon and the raison d'etre of her art. Roysdon, along with collaborators k8 Hardy and Ginger Brooks Takahashi, publishes Lesbians To The Rescue, a "zine-cum–art journal" investigating "queer genders and identities," which just moved from two dimensions to three with a gallery installation at Marsea Goldberg's New Image Art in West Hollywood. The installation, coordinated by Roysdon and independent curator Darin Klein, provided a convenient bit of synchronicity for the New York City-based artist's move to LA, where she is currently enlarging her academic profile with MFA studies at UCLA under the tutelage of veteran artist Mary Kelly. "We're here to constitute a new team under an old threat," is how Roysdon capsulized LTTR's mission statement in its debut issue.

Roysdon was embarked on a mission of another sort when I contacted at her LA residence. "Yesterday I was mad at Los Angeles," was her reply to my predictable query about the culture shock accompanying her shift to the palm latitudes, "but today I'm painting my whole room in chalkboard paint so I can write on the walls." No one but an artist would revel in revisiting the purgatory of public school, but for a text-based artist like Roysdon, nirvana is a bedroom that is also a three-dimensional text message.

If photographer Richard Renaldi's body of work had a title, it might be How to Achieve Naturalism in a Photo-Sensitive Age. Labeled a humanist by his supporters, Renaldi's detractors are more difficult to locate, his portraiture occupying an irony-free zone in marked contrast to the hyperventilating tendencies characteristic of contemporary fashion and celebrity representation.

With a BFA in photography from New York University, Renaldi keeps a studio in downtown LA's historic Orpheum Theatre building on Broadway. HIV-positive since 1996, the photographer has devoted a sizable portion of his portfolio to putting a living, human face on those afflicted with AIDS, including long-term survivors. If there is a special poignancy to this portfolio, it is because the photographer has been so resolutely clear-eyed in his depictions, striving for neither pity nor victimization — only inclusion. Renaldi had his first one-man exhibition, the critically acclaimed Fresno/Newark, last December at Manhattan's Debs & Co. gallery in Chelsea. He was included in Strangers, the International Center for Photography's first triennial, and has an upcoming solo exhibition at LA's Western Project.

Finally, complementing all this new wine is a vintage brew that has cellared extremely well. Robert Richards wears big glasses, like Carrie Donovan, and is an elder statesman among gay artists, having survived the ancien régime and the old century to find a revival of interest in his evocative, stylized renderings of the porn gods of the pre-condom era. Originally commissioned for gay sex magazines such as Topman, Richards' iconography is arguably as vital to the brief, colorful history of gay theatrical porn as George Hurrell's is to the pantheon of stars from Hollywood's Studio Era. Richards, who stood in line to see Boys in the Sand next to Jacqueline Onassis, had his immaculate, airbrushed way with every porn icon from Casey Donovan to Jeff Stryker, but it is the early, pre-video performers, like Al Parker, or Peter Berlin, who retain the most charisma. In this new century, where porn has become an equal opportunity employer, the old days of the Adonis Theatre and the notorious Park-Miller are lost in the sands of time. Some of that sand, however, and the boys that frolicked in it, live on in Richard's iconic drawings.

Everything old is new again, though you can't go home. ▶

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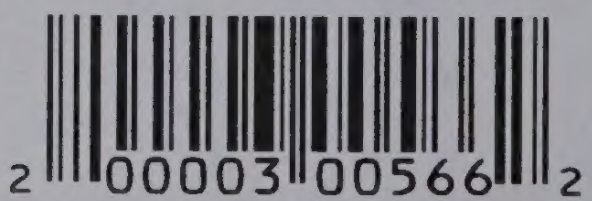
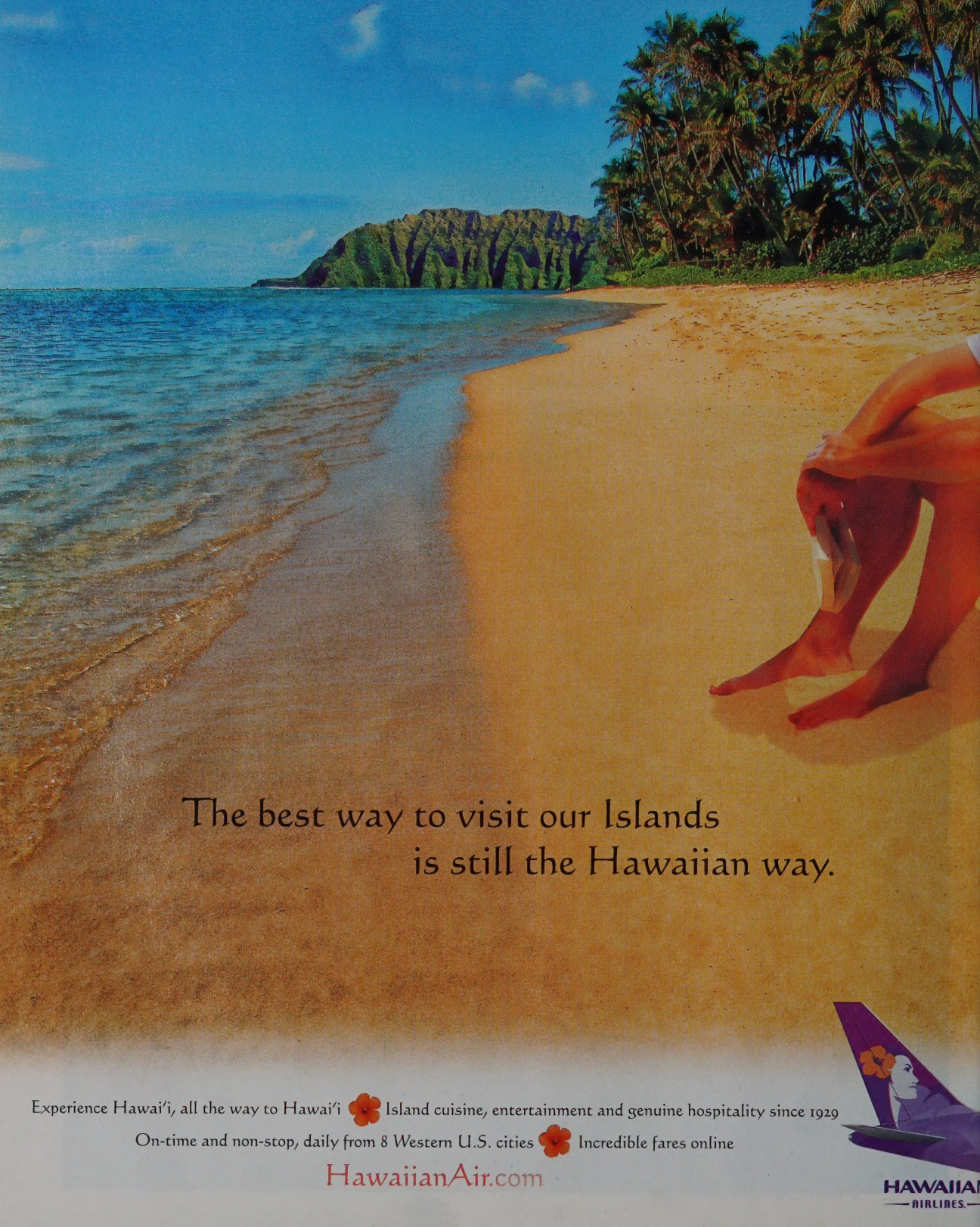


**RICHARD RENALDI**
NEWARK
FRESNO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# CONSPICUOUS ATHENS

**The Olympics return to their original site this August, but as Panayiotis Hadjistefanous reports, there's plenty of fun here even without the Games.**

The Athenian gay and lesbian scene reflects the double identity of the city itself. On the one hand there is a westernized, Euro-style bar and club scene, familiar to any visitor coming over from Europe, Australia, or the USA. But there's another scene, too, a vibrant underground reflecting Athens' intrinsic multiethnic flavor. Situated somewhat uneasily between a Middle Eastern mentality that continues to inform Greek culture, and the decidedly sybaritic tone of southern Europe, this distinctly Greek alternative to western gay life offers its own appeal to visitors who want to experience Greece completely. The guide which follows divides the city's gay and lesbian life into two categories: Western and "Traditional." We suggest you try both. Like in any interesting gay scene, it's all about the mix.

# GREEK CULTURE 101:

- Musically, Greek gay clubs are an acquired taste. If it's London- or New York–quality club music you are after, it's best to go either to the super-trendy U-Matic or to the established Plus Soda clubs. Both are very gay friendly, and feature the best international and local dj talent. Check nightlife listings in one of the Athenian guides for details, as the music and social scene will vary enormously even from week to week.
- Many of the Athenian bars and clubs listed below are closed during the month of August, so a phone call is advised before you step out.
- Always carry your passport with you if you're planning for a stroll in the park, as police raids are not unheard of.
- Greeks never go clubbing or bar-hopping before 1am, even on weekdays.
- The cruising part of the Traditional scene is mostly escort-oriented. Be very clear about what you're after and what you are prepared to pay. Although the boys are usually friendly and peace loving, it's best to avoid any misunderstandings. If anything goes wrong, do not hesitate to call the police (freephone 100) — they are very helpful.
- Not all nightclubs or bars charge an entrance fee. If they do, it should never be higher than ten euros, unless some sort of special dj, attraction, or show is on. Check first.
- Don't miss out our beautiful, rocky gay nudist beach called Limanakia, on the coastal road to Sounion. Take the B1 or B2 bus to Varkiza, and ask to get off at the "Triti Stasi Limanakia–Kantina" (the third Limanakia stop, at the canteen." Prepare for a steep downhill climb to the coast — definitely not for anyone with mobility difficulties.

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## PUBLICATIONS

*Deon*: Glossy freezine that you can find in most of the gay bars and clubs. Lots of listings, interviews with pop/TV/porn stars, and personal ads. Host of the legendary Mr. Gay Greece contest, held in the beautiful hotel Elysium in Mykonos during the summer.
*The Greek Gay Guide, Edition '03-'04*: All sorts of very interesting information for the whole of Greece, Cyprus, and Mykonos. Thoroughly updated every year, this pocket-sized treasure knows what it's talking about, listing everything of interest about cafés, bars, clubs, saunas, restaurants, pick-up hangouts, parks, video clubs, hotels and lots more.

## INTERNET

**www.deon.gr**: The sister portal to the *Deon* freezine, full of useful information and everything you expect from a good gay site. Great online search engine with travel forms for finding accommodations.
**www.gaygreece.gr**: Part of the *Deon* network, specializing in listings and travel-related info. Great site, extremely useful stuff.
**www.gay.gr**: Associated with the Elliniki Omofylofili Koinotita, the Greek homosexual community organization. A well-designed portal offering most of the usual stuff — chat rooms, personals, news, etc.
**www.lesbian.gr**: Still under construction, but very promising.
**www.eok.gr**: The official site of the Elliniki Omofylofili Koinotita, specializing in issues of gay and lesbian rights.
**www.gaydar.co.uk/chat/greece**: Always full of chatty Greeks, this chatroom is a good place to find out the latest tips and details of the Greek gay scene.

## RESTAURANTS

There are no gay restaurants as such in Athens, but some are very popular with gay men and lesbians. Check out the following, but don't expect an exclusively queer crowd. Food quality and prices vary. Most of these restaurants are quite trendy, so reservations are advisable.

### Modern Taverna

*Mamaka's*: 41 Persefonis Street, Gazi; telephone 2103 4 64984. Open everyday, 14.00–01.30. No credit cards accepted.

### Modern Cuisine

*De Luxe*: 15 Falirou St., Makrygianni; tel. 2109 2 43184 (Acropolis Metro Station). Open Monday to Friday, 21.00–01.00, Sat. 21.00–01.00. Visa/Mastercard.

### Indian

*Yoga Bala*: 5-7 Riga Palamidou St.; tel. 2103 3 11335. Open everyday, 15.00–02.00. Visa/Mastercard.

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## Eastern Mediterranean

*Multi Culti*: 8 Ag.Theklas St., Psyrri (Monastiraki Metro Station). Open every day, 21.30–02.00. All cards accepted, except Diners.

## All Day

*Food Company*: 47 Anagnostopoulou St., Kolonaki; tel. 2103 6 30373. Monday to Saturday10.00–24.00, Sunday 12.00–24.00.

## Fast Food

*Neon Café and Restaurant*: At Omonoia Square. Probably the largest of all the central coffeehouses, with a good selection of snacks, light meals, and sweets. A very popular cruising spot.

## CAFES

*Blue Train* (www.bluetrain.gr): 84 Konstantinoupoleos Ave., Gazi; tel. 2103 4 60667. Cute coffee bar right next to the train rails. Open every day from 9.30 until late at night.

*Enidrio Internet Café* (www.enydrio.gr): 8 Syggrou Av. and Lembesi St., Makrigianni; tel. 2109 2 12396 (Acropolis Metro Station). Light snacks, lunch, dinner, ice cream and Internet access and games.

*Kirki*: 31 Apostolou Pavlou St., Thissio; tel. 2103 4 66960 (Thissio Metro Station). Open-air café with a stunning view of the Acropolis. This is where all of gay Athens whiles away the lazy summer afternoons and evenings.

*Sto 54* (www.sto54.com): 54 Mitropoleos St., Plaka; tel. 2103 3 18781 (Monastiraki Metro Station). Part of the Magna Grecia gay hotel, this cozy bistro is open from 4pm until late at night, offering drinks, coffee, sweets, and light snacks. Great view.

## BARS (WESTERN)

*Aleco's Island*: 42 Tsakalof St. (basement), Kolonaki. An all-time classic bar. The crowd tends toward the over 25 and bear types, and it's one of the few places where you can go and have an early drink — that is, around 11pm.

*Dare*: 1st floor of the shopping center at 5 Tsakalof St., Kolonaki. A relaxed lounge/bar offering great music. Open daily from noon and ideal for an early night out.

*Fairy Tale* (www.fairytale.gr): 25 Koletti St., Exarcheia; tel. 2103 3 01763. Small, cozy bar in the student area of Athens, open from 02.00 every Sunday for a light snack or coffee.

*Granazi*: 20 Lempesi and Kallirois Avenues, Makrigianni; tel. 2109 2 44185 (Acropolis Metro Station). Relaxed bar playing only Greek music for an older crowd.

## CLUBS

*Cone*: 35 Triptolemou St., Gazi; tel. 2103 4 58118. Small, but always packed and pumping, especially for fans of Greek music.

*Flying In*: 34 Charilaou Trikoupi St., Piraeus; tel. 2104 5 33993. The only gay club in the Piraeus area, this spot also focuses on Greek music.

*Kazarma*: 84 Konstantinoupoleos Ave., 1st floor, Gazi; tel. 2103 4 60667. The newest gay club in Athens; small but friendly and fun, attracting a stylish, young crowd. Open Thursday through Sunday, offering a pop and house mix by the TNT dj team.

*Koukles*: 3 Zan Moreas St., Koukaki; tel. 2109 2 48989 (Fix Metro Station). The best drag show in Athens, and the premier transvestite hangout. Open Wednesday through Sunday, shows on Friday and Saturday.

*Lamda*: (www.lamdaclub.gr): 15 Lembesi St., Makrigianni, tel. 2109 2 24202 (Acropolis Metro Station). The busiest and most popular gay bar/club in Athens. Two floors, packed at the weekend, offering a mix of pop, house and Greek hits. The only club with backrooms, which are always jammed.

*Lizard*: 31 Apostolou Pavlou St., Thissio Square (Thissio Metro Station). This cozy, relaxed bar/club is something of a Sunday evening institution; only open Sunday evenings. One of the few places in Athens that people gather earlier — around 10pm is a good time to go.

*Sodade* (www.sodade.gr): 10 Triptolemou St., Gazi; tel. 2103 4 68657. Sodade attracts the most stylish gay crowd in Athens, and is always packed. There are two stages — one playing Euro-pop and Greek hits, the other specializing in truly excellent house music. The only gay club in Athens to offer such high-quality dance music.

*Play My Music*: 78 Konstantinoupoleos St., on the corner of Iera Odos, Gazi; tel. 2103 4 11141. A cruisy, popular bar with an outdoor patio during the summer months, offering Greek pop hits and a lively crowd.

*Playback*: Aristofanous 11 Psyrri, first floor; tel. 699 3947663 (Thisseion Metro Station). Open Thursday to Sunday. The newest addition to the Athenian gay scene is this sleek club, already popular for its high-quality club music. The best Athenian DJs plus a few special guests spin techno, house and all their hybrids for an enthusiastic young crowd. On Sundays, there are special parties, beginning at 10pm — early by Greek standards.

## BARS (TRADITIONAL)

*Fantastiko*: 37 Aristotelous St., downtown Athens; tel. 2108 8 19720 (Victoria Metro Station). Cute Romanian and Albanian go-go dancers around 2am Sunday. Escorts.

*Gallery*: 9 Filis and 52 Acharnon St., downtown Athens; tel. 2108 2 51966 (Victoria Metro Station). Greek music, multi-ethnic clientele. Escorts.

*Live Bait*: 34 Filis St., downtown Athens; tel. 2108 8 22134 (Victoria Metro Station). The most happening of all the traditional spots, it's worth visiting on a Saturday night when the multi-ethnic gay crowd really parties hard until early Sunday morning.

*Strass*: 32 Odyssea Androutsou St., Koukaki; tel. 2109 2 21622 (Fix Metro Station). Popular with trannies and the men who chase them.

*Test Me*: 64 Pipinou St., Victoria Square, tel. 2108 2 26029 (Victoria Metro Station).A friendly meeting place for older men and the younger men who like them.

*The Guys*: 8 Lempesi St., Makrigianni; tel. 2109 2 14244. Small and quiet lounge for older and younger men who want to meet each other.

## SAUNAS

*Athens Relax*: Xouthou 8 and Socratous Streets, Omonoia Square; tel. 2105 2 28800 (Omonoia Metro Station). Open everyday except Sunday and bank holidays from 13.00 until 20.00. Offers steam room, rest rooms, sauna, private cabins, lockers, bar, showers, masseurs.

*Ira Baths*: 4 Zinonos St., Omonoia Square (Omonoia Metro Station). Open every day except Sundays and bank holidays. For adventurous souls only.

## OUTDOORS

Although it can be risky, outdoor cruising in Greece can also be a pleasure — especially during the hot summer nights. Do not carry money or any valuables with you, but do have a photocopy of your passport in case you are unlucky enough to be busted by a police raid. These happen often, but gays are not their target; the police are on the lookout for petty

thieves, etc. Though nothing happens except an identification procedure, it is more than probable that they will let you go immediately if you can prove that you are a tourist.

*Zappeio Park*, downtown Athens, Syntagma Square Metro Station. Everywhere in the park, all day and night, but especially around the little church of Aghia Foteini on the corner of Vouliagmenis Avenue.

*Pedion tou Areos Park*, Victoria Metro Station. More dangerous than Zappeion. Busier during the afternoon and nights.

*Dalikeri*, at the end of Orfeos St. (Aghias Annis area) behind the OASA garage/bus depot. Only at night and by car — pedestrians are usually escorts.

## LESBIAN ATHENS

By American standards, the lesbian scene in Athens is rather low-key, orbiting mainly around the men's clubs. On the other hand, the island of Lesbos (see below) has a lively lesbian scene in the summer months. The sole girls-only club in Athens is *Teleia kai Pavla* (see listings). Other than that, lesbians tend to congregate in the trendier clubs and restaurants where everyone is welcome.

*So Bar, So Food*: 23 Persefonis St., Gkazi area; tel. 2103 4 17774 (Thisseion Metro Station). Always full with a young and stylish crowd. The favorite hangout of fashion-conscious Athenian lesbians. During the summer months the fun spills outdoors, with tables and dancing in the streets.

*Mayo*: 33 Persefonis St., Gkazi area; tel. 2103 4 23066 (Thisseion Metro Station). The terrace of this stylish bar has to be seen to be believed, offering a stunning view of the former Gkazi industrial area and the Acropolis. This bar attracts mainly guys, but a lot of girls find the civilized atmosphere and cool music attractive.

*Telia kai Pavla*: 98 Alexandras Ave. and Charilaou Trikoupi St. One of the few predominantly lesbian bars in Athens.

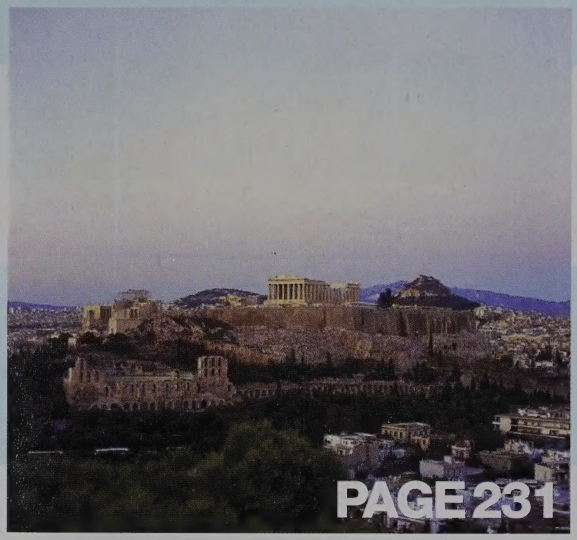
## CULTURE

*National Gallery*: 50 Vas Konstantinou Avenue, across the street from the Hilton Athens (Evaggelismos Metro Station). Open Monday and Wednesday 9am – 3pm and 6pm – 9pm; Thursday to Saturday 9am – 9pm; Sunday 10am – 2pm. Specializing in exhibitions focusing on classical art, the National Gallery has housed internationally acclaimed shows including works by Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci and Titian. The permanent collection offers an overview of Greek painting during the last two centuries.

*The Archaeological Museum of Athens*: Patision Ave. (Victoria Metro Station). Closed for renovations until the Olympic Games in August. Not to be missed — a truly metaphysical experience. The beauty of what you will see will forever change the way you look at the world.

*Deste Institute for The Contemporary Arts*: Omirou 16, Psyxiko. This beautiful space exhibits parts of the collection of Dakis Joannou, a Greek-Cypriot magnate who is one of the most important art collectors in the world. It features extremely important works, by artists ranging from monstres sacrées like Joseph Beuys to brand new stars such as Assume Vivid Astro Focus. Sometime during the early summer months, the long-awaited *Dakis Joannou Space* will open in a different area of Athens, featuring the whole collection under permanent exhibition. Any art lover must visit.

*Breeder Projects*: Evmorfopoulou 6, Psyrri (Thisseio Metro Station). Wednesday to Saturday, 1pm – 10pm. Specializing in contemporary art from the UK and USA, this underground gallery has established itself as a premier space for innovative voices from the international art world.




*Vamiali Art Space*: Samou 1, Plateia Karaiskaki; tel. 2103 3 17527 (Metaxourgeio Metro Station). Open Wednesday to Saturday, 2pm – 10pm. Brand new space offering interesting work from international artists, focusing on the young and the restless.

*Megaron Mousikis*: Vasilisis Sofias Ave. and Kokkali (Megaro Mousikis Metro Station). Open daily 10am – 6pm. This is the temple for classical music and opera lovers in Athens, offering concerts from the most important symphonic orchestras and classical music groups from around the world. Apart from the classical canon, some very interesting avant-garde performances are often on show. As this is one of the premier cultural spots in Athens, book as early as possible to avoid disappointment, and leave your jeans at home — this is a dressy evening.

*BIOS* (www.biofighter.com): 84 Peiraios Ave.; tel. 2103 4 25335. One of the most exciting club spaces in Athens, offering the most sophisticated nights in town. The attractions include the crème de la crème of the international electronic music scene, truly avant-garde DJ bookings, special film festivals, all kinds of interesting art installations, and projects and exhibitions, as well as seminars, talks and events. This is the future of clubbing. Check their site for listings.

*Odos Panos*: 39 Didotou Street, Exarcheia; tel. 2103 6 16782, e-mail chronas@otenet.gr. This is the bookshop that houses the *Odos Panos* publishing house and literary magazine, a high-quality operation offering a uniquely Greek homoerotic aesthetic. Unfortunately all the books and magazines are in Greek, but it's worth visiting for the divine art books. Ask for *Greek Sculptures*, a collectible art book featuring erotic photographs of Greek men from the 1950s and '60s. Also browse the truly fascinating series of postcards.

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My humble origins.

Then I got pilfered.
How titillating!

My 15 minutes.

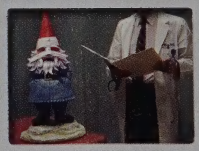
My captors said to keep
their identities hush-hush.

Now it's off to see the world
nestled amongst the tightie whities.

Love the toga, darling.

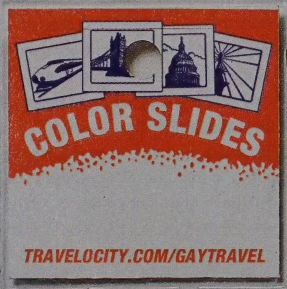
1. Here in LA, I feel
the need to enhance

2. Nip and tuck



3. Years off my face

4. The bronzed Adonis
on the beach



The discreet tourist

It's amazing what one can do
with a cucumber.

Be still my concrete heart.

I pray I don't have a
wardrobe malfunction.

Book me, Dan-o.

To see these slides in all their glory, go to travelocity.com/gaytravel

I remember it was chilly that day.

Boy, are they going to have mother issues.

We're here to help you on your trip whether you're gay, straight or just waffling.

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I kept telling him it's just a knock-knock joke.

My, that's quite the public display.

GOD LORD!! Quicksand!

2. Hairy male alert

3. Warming my whats-its

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But which way is purgatory?

Standing proud.

Duly noted.

Saluting you, too.

Happens to the best of us.

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Roy and Silo, the first penguins to play for the home team.

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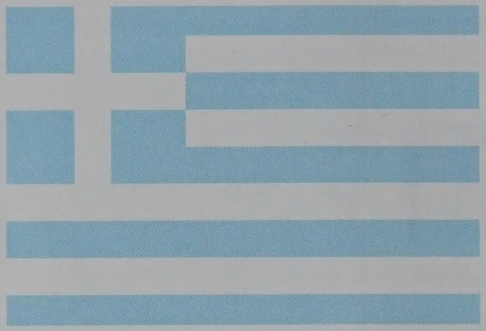
# GETTING AWAY TO THE *GREEK ISLES*



## LESBOS

Also known as Mytilini, this island is the birthplace of the famous ancient lesbian poetess Sappho. During the '70s, a thriving lesbian scene was established in Eressos, a beach resort about 90 kilometers from the main city of Mytilini. This is active only during the summer season, but lesbians from all over the world make it worthwhile. Check the www.lesbian.gr site for information. Here are some tips.

### BARS

*Fuego Bar*: The trendiest of all the lesbian bars in Eressos, it hosts the famed Cyberdykes parties during the summer months, thrown by Maria Cyber, a Greek party promoter and all around lesbian celebrity. During the winter, the parties are given once a month in Athens, at the Mad club. Check www.lesbian.gr.
*Mariannas*: The oldest lesbian hangout in Eressos, with a secluded beach terrace and loud music. Everyone goes there.
*Sappho Garden*: A romantic, secluded spot, in the garden of the recently renovated Sappho hotel. Ideal for long drinks and romantic rendezvous.

### CLUBS

*Naos*: On the outskirts of Eressos, this is one of the few discos on Lesbos that organizes lesbian parties, often bringing in international DJs. Packed, friendly and pumping.
*Primitive Club*: Near the Aeolian Village resort, with a lush garden and a huge dance floor. Often hosts Cyberdyke parties.

### HOTELS

*Sappho Hotel*: Tel. 2253 0 53495. One of the most out lesbian hotels in Eressos, with an excellent restaurant and beautiful beach bars. They often host lesbian parties with guest women DJs.
*Antiopi Hotel* (www.antiopi.net): Tel. 2253 0 53311. Just a seven-minute walk from the beach and recently renovated, this is the oldest lesbian hotel in Eressos, offering nice rooms, a great terrace, jacuzzi and many other amenities.

### INFORMATION

*Eressos Travel* (www.lesvos.com/eressos): Tel. 2251 0 42746 and 42313. Friendly and supportive of lesbian tourism, the people at this agency will help you with all your travel needs for Lesbos.

## MYKONOS

Still going strong after all these years, Mykonos is not only the premier destination for Greek party animals but also an international gay hot spot. To be honest, the whole island is gay to varying degrees, but there are some spots that are particularly queer. Be advised that the island is extremely expensive. High season rates rival any cosmopolitan resort.

### BARS

*Kastro* (Tel. 2289 0 23072, Mikri Venetia): A chill afternoon spot, with classical music and sunset views.
*Pierros* (Tel. 2289 0 22177, Aghia Kyriaki): Where the Mykonian gay scene started, back in the '70s. Still extremely popular, the crowd spills onto the streets blocking traffic.
*Manto* (Tel. 22890 22652, Aghia Kyriaki): Next door to Pierros, and just as popular.
*Piano Bar* (Mikri Venetia): Phyllis belts out a cracking selection of show tunes and standards, and her MC-ing is just as entertaining. Don't miss out.

### CLUBS

*Ikaros* (Tel. 2289 0 22718): Right above Manto bar, with a beautiful terrace overlooking the city and unexpected shows.
*Coco Club* (Super Paradise, south side): A beautiful bar and restaurant, operating from morning until sundown. All day party atmosphere and stunning views on the main gay beach of Mykonos.
*Ramrod* (on Manto Square): Open from the early hours of the afternoon, for a drink on the terrace. Pumping house music by young djs.

### HOTEL

*Elysium Hotel* (Tel. 2289 0 23952, above the Scholi Kalon Technon, the local art school compound) A luxury hotel with almost exclusive gay clientele. Lovely poolside bar, beautiful people, also hosts the legendary Mr. Gay Greece contest sponsored by *Deon* magazine.

### WILDLIFE

Do not forget to take a stroll around the world famous Paraportiani church late at night. It is definitely the most magical cruising spot on earth, so romantic that you can enjoy it even if you are not in the mood for love with a proper stranger.

# Irish monks settled Iceland to meditate. We haven't seen much of them lately.

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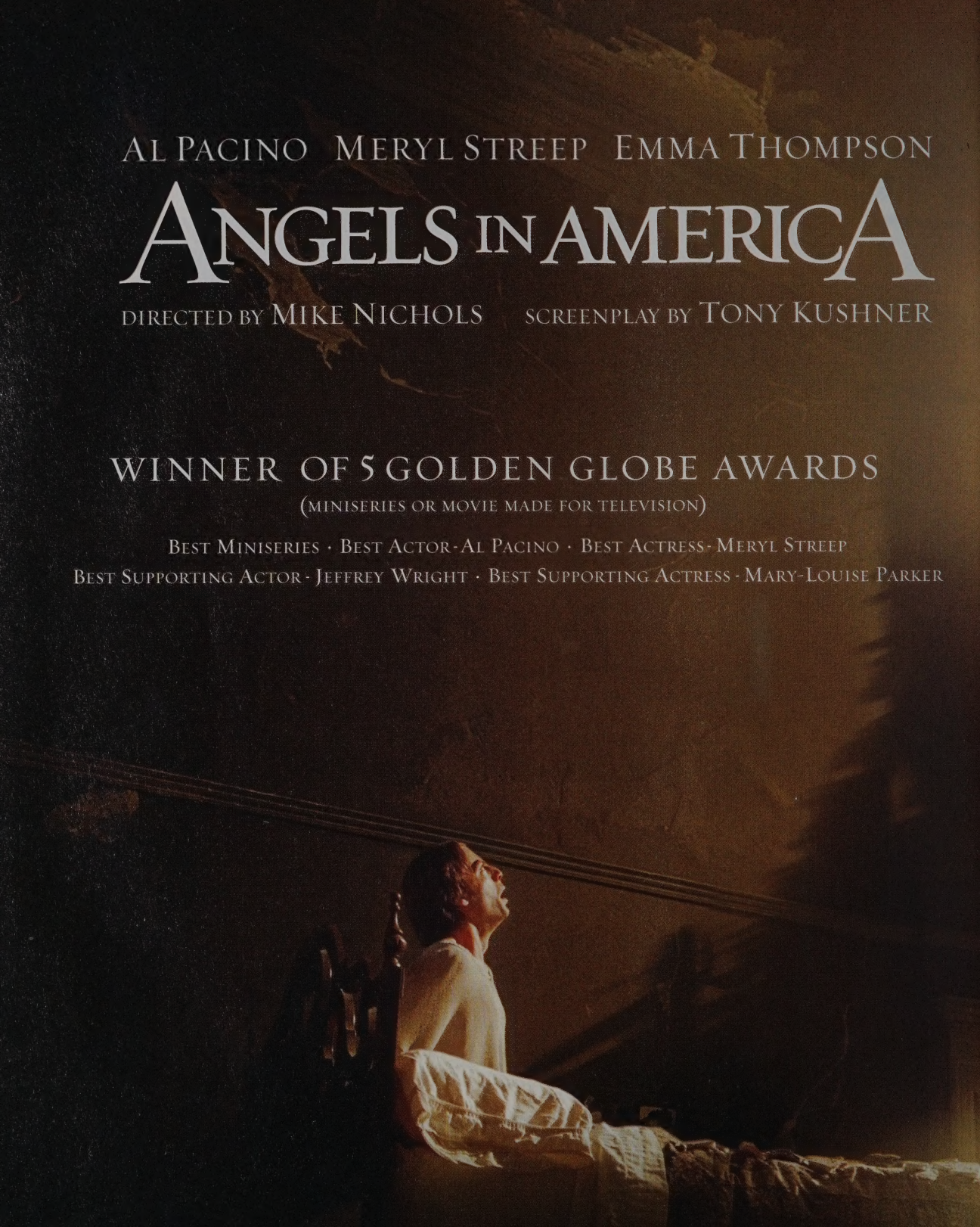

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HBO VIDEO

# CLASS

We all know the canon of vintage, must-see queer films: *The Women*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Can't Stop the Music* among them. But here's a few flicks that should also be on the list of must-see popcorn premieres. **Kevin Maynard** tells which, and why...

This summer, it's nice to report that there will actually be some gay major releases. Well, at least two of them. In July, we can expect some of John Waters' trademark trash fun with *A Dirty Shame*, and a bisexual Colin Farrell in an adaptation of Michael Cunningham's first novel, *A Home at the End of the World*. That should tide us over until Christmas, when we'll get to see a bisexual Colin Farrell in *Alexander*. Of course, also expect some top-quality foreign and indie films of queer note. But to cool out this summer, try these old favorites that aren't the usual same-sex classics. What do they have in common? Entertainment value—there ain't one *Claire of the Moon*/*Making Love* snoozer on the list.

# FILMS

THE EYES OF LAURA MARS

**THE EYES OF LAURA MARS (1978)** We all know which movie Faye Dunaway's most known for—we threw out wire hangers to prove it. But three years earlier, she played an outré fashion photographer who uses sex and violence to sell her images. That is, until she starts having psychic premonitions of actual murders while on her shoots. The crime plot's kinda negligible, but the '70s Halston Manhattan backdrop is dead on. Plus there's the always-swish Rene Auberjonois as her trusty aide-de-camp, a hunky young Tommy Lee Jones as her current conquest, and a gorgeously cheesy title song, "(Prisoner) Love Theme from the Eyes of Laura Mars" sung by whom else but Babs herself. A probing meditation on voyeurism? Uh, no. A chance to see la Faye at her most fab run, jump and shoot in pantsuits and thigh-highs? Yes!

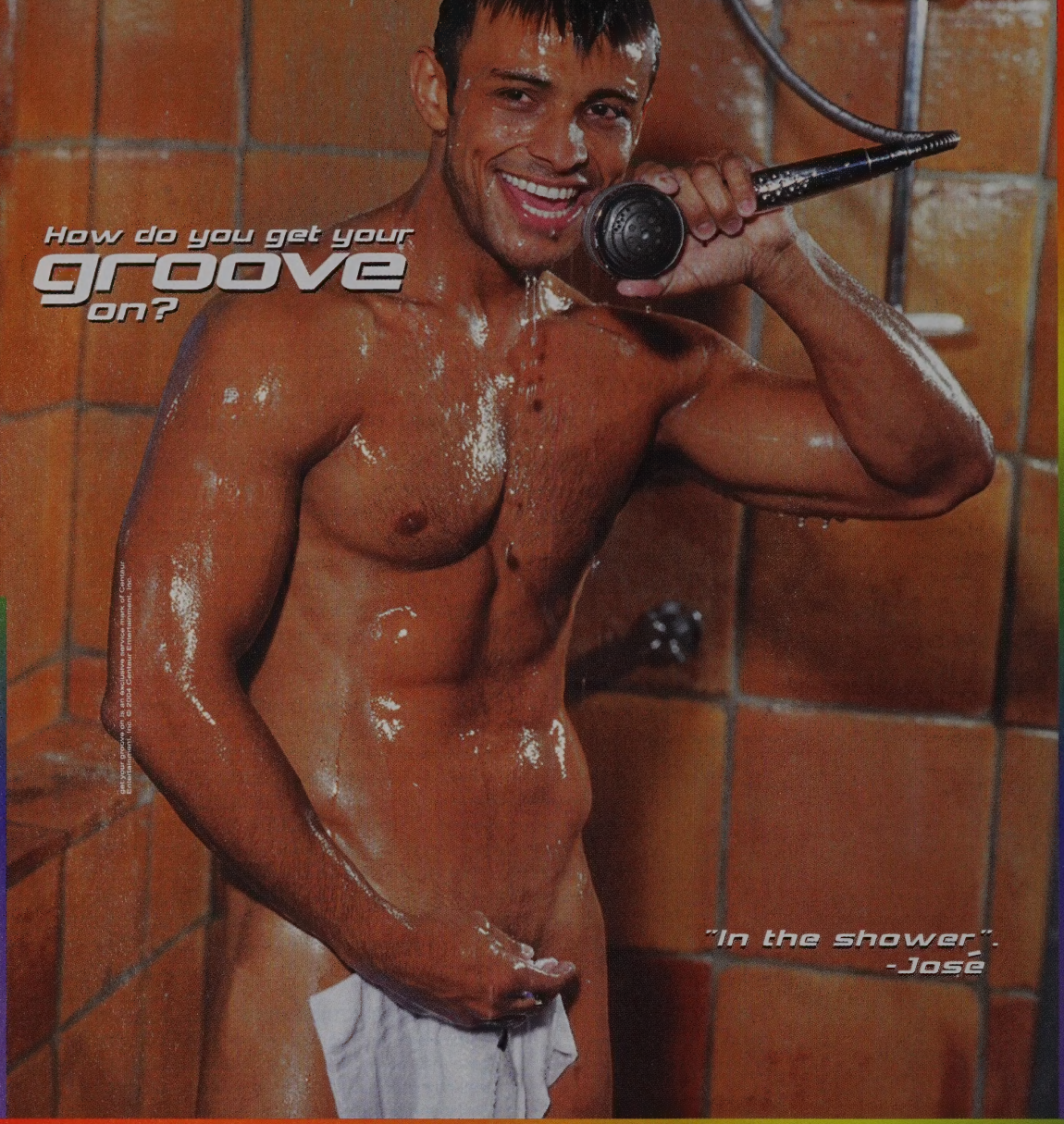
HEAVENLY CREATURES

**WRITTEN ON THE WIND (1957)** Todd Haynes took the '50s Douglas Sirk-style melodrama to new heights with *Far From Heaven*, and other Sirk films adhere more literally to the queer canon because of their forbidden-love storylines (*Imitation of Life, All that Heaven Allows*). But none are more irresistible kitsch than this '57 drama about a highly dysfunctional brother and sister who are the heirs to a small oil town. As always, there is the beautifully chiseled Rock Hudson, but the belles are the ball here: smoky Lauren Bacall as the good girl, and Dorothy Malone in an Oscar-winning performance as an unrepentant nymphomaniac who knows just what to do with a mini-replica of an oil derrick. See this melodrama on a big screen in all its Technicolor brilliance.

**HEAVENLY CREATURES (1994)** You can keep Middle Earth. Here, Peter Jackson recreates the '50's murder case that rocked New Zealand, involving two homicidal, lesbian schoolgirls played with terrifying conviction by newcomers Kate Winslet and Melanie Lynskey (whom we should be seeing more of). Yes, Jackson can choreograph an epic fight scene with a billion extras, but more impressively he can capture the hormonal fever pitch of two adolescents dangerously enthralled by their own imaginations.

FOXES

**FOXES (1980)** A slice of San Fernando Valley strip mall movie heaven, this exemplary teensploitation flick about a quartet of teenage girls from director Adrian Lyne (*Flashdance, Fatal Attraction*) features two delicious dyke icons: Jodie Foster as the maternal straight arrow, and ex-Runaways member Cherie Currie as a lost wild child. Groove on Giorgio Moroder's funky soundtrack, including Donna Summer's plaintive "On the Radio," and watch these ladies cut class, drop drugs and tease a menagerie of men including dreamy skater boy Scott Baio. Before there was Carrie, Miranda, Charlotte, and Samantha, there was Jeanie, Madge, Annie, and Deirdre. ▶

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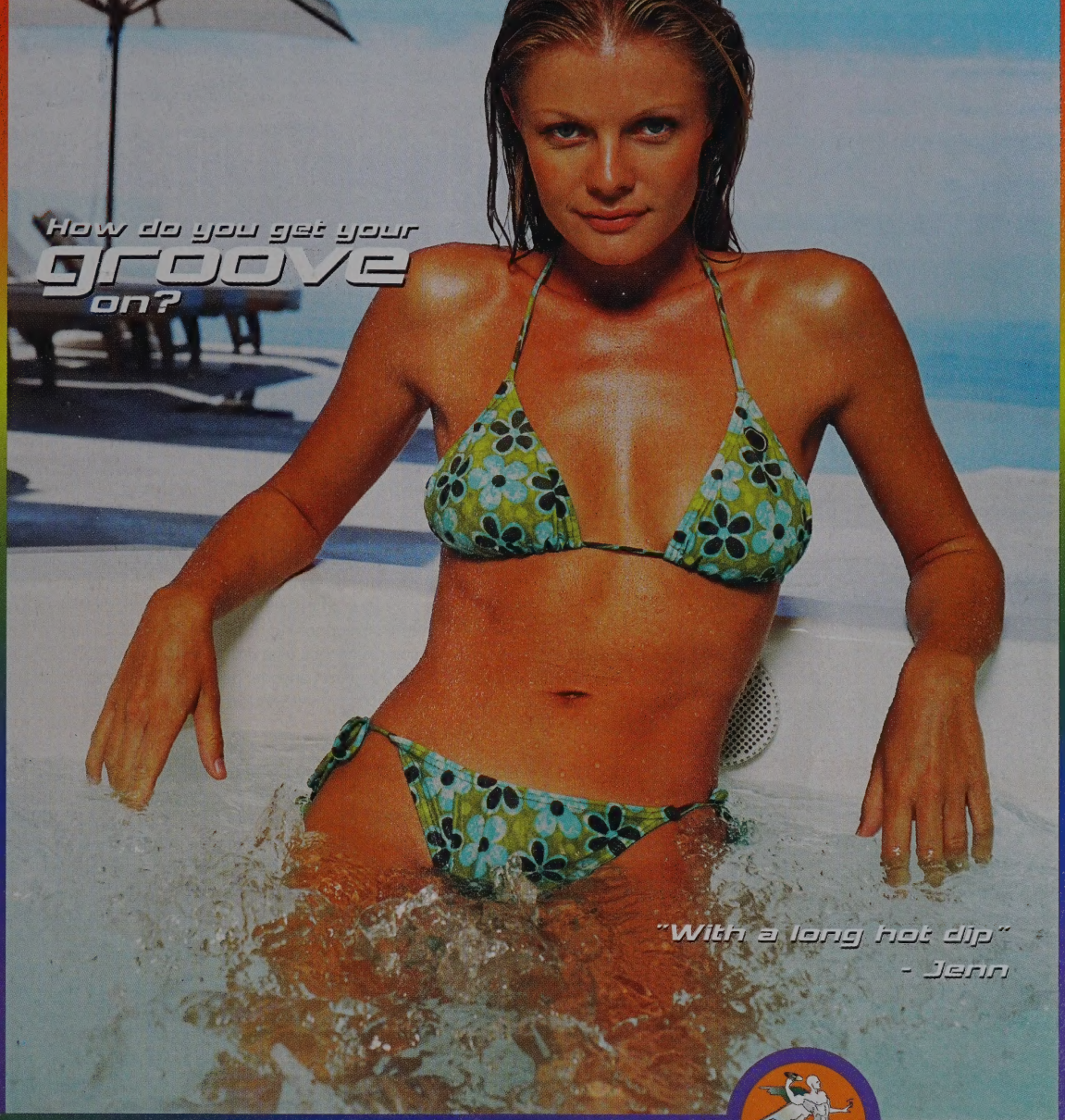


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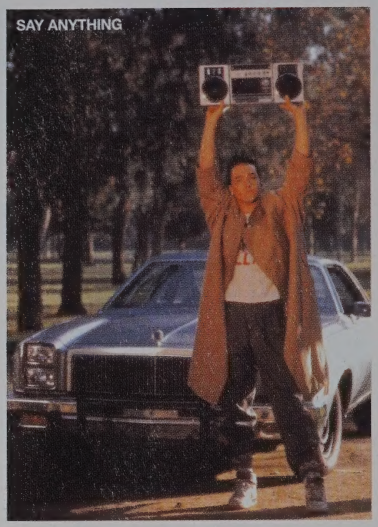

THE RITZ

**FORTUNE AND MEN'S EYES (1971), SHORT EYES (1977)** Before there was *Oz* there were these two groundbreaking prison films. The first, a Canadian drama, wins in the Most Gratuitous Gay Prison Sex department. *Fortune* also boasts a full-bodied performance from the late Michael Greer (*The Gay Deceivers*) as Queenie, a sardonic drag queen who tries to protect young naïve Smitty (Wendell Pierce) from life behind bars. The second is a sober, uncompromising adaptation of bisexual writer Miguel Pinero's play about life in an NYC house of detention. Bruce Davison gives a chilling performance — light years away from his work in *Longtime Companion* — as the title character, a white-collar child molester left to fend for himself.

**PARIS IS BURNING (1990)** Slim, trim, streamlined — to quote the words of a Harlem drag ball emcee — are adjectives that perfectly capture why this documentary from Jennie Livingston works so well. In a mere 79 minutes, the film cuts across class, race and sexual lines, detailing the lives of gay black and Latino men and giving us a history lesson in "vogue-ing" (you know Madonna didn't come up with that shit). It's also hilariously bitchy and touchingly real. The untimely death of transgendered legend Venus Xtravaganza exposed us to the reality of hate crimes. And using Cheryl Lynn's disco anthem "To Be Real" gets to the film's baubled heart. That's all these transsexuals want: a chance at fame, family, life and love. In short, acceptance. Unjustly snubbed by the Oscars — the film wasn't even nominated for Best Documentary — these regal divas still reign over a decade later.

**SAY ANYTHING (1989)** Ok, there's nothing terribly queer about this 1989 James L. Brooks romantic comedy about a valedictorian that falls for a happily clueless kickboxing guy on the last night of high school. We could argue that there's a gay-fabulous supporting cast: Joan Cusack, Lili Taylor, Bebe Neuwirth, and, in a couple of memorable scenes as a drunk punk, Jason Gould. But the real reason this movie's on the list is that there isn't anyone, gay or straight, who wouldn't swoon if John Cusack's Lloyd Dobler stood in front of their window blasting Peter Gabriel's "In Your Eyes" from a boombox.

**NEXT STOP, GREENWICH VILLAGE (1976)** Paul Mazursky's seriocomic, semi-autobiography is one the most neglected films of the '70s. This story of a nice Brooklyn Jewish boy, circa the late '50s, who hops boroughs to pursue his dreams of being an actor has a brilliant cast. Among them are Ellen Greene of *Little Shop of Horrors* fame, the indomitable Shelley Winters at her ferocious finest as a smothering mother, and the equally peerless Antonio Fargas as Bernstein, a black gay Jew with a knack for reinvention. Sadly the film's quirky leading man, Lenny Baker, was one of the first casualties of AIDS. It's high time this American *Amarcord* received its due.

**THE RITZ (1976)** Take a Feydeau farce and transplant it to a swinging '70s gay bathhouse and you've got this lovably dated comedy from director Richard Lester (*A Hard Day's Night, Petulia*). The script by Terrence McNally (*Love Valor Compassion*) is as thin as the towels of the studly staff, and as many jokes fizzle as sizzle, but there's also a host of hilarious caricatures. It's a testament to Rita Moreno's true musical skills that she scores as a no-talent Charo-style entertainer named Googie Gomez. (Check out her toneless rendition of "Everything's Coming up Roses.") Plus there's Treat Williams as a beefcake undercover detective with an unusually high voice and a fey, fabulous F. Murray Abraham (pre-*Angels in America*, pre-*Amadeus*) as a gay spa queen.

**THE LEGEND OF BILLIE JEAN (1985)** After an accidental shooting, a young blonde teenager runs away from Corpus Christi, Texas, cuts her long tresses in favor of a spiky, dykey 'do, and becomes a fugitive for justice. Sigh, aren't we all? This B movie about kids' rights is a must for any baby lezzie looking for popcorn empowerment. It features '80s ingenue Helen Slater (*Supergirl, The Secret of My Success*) and a hard-rocking Pat Benatar theme song, "Invincible." One viewing will have you chanting, "Fair is fair! Fair is fair!"

*Kevin Maynard is a freelance television producer and entertainment journalist who writes for* Premiere, Variety, The Advocate, *and* USA Today.

# PURITY FOR PURISTS

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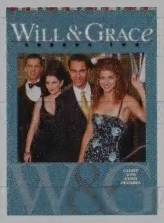
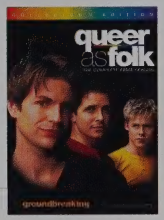
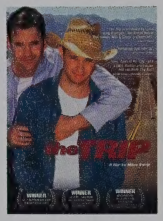
**Five years ago, half of these DVDs didn't exist.**





**Five years from now, there'll be too many to fit on the page.**

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# OUT LOUD

## Ray Rogers
## amplifies the best sounds of 2004.

**MESHELL NDEGEOCELLO**
**Comfort Woman** *(Maverick)* **out now.**
Her most moving album yet finds the complicated genius coming to grips with the simple stuff of life: peace, happiness, self-love. This dreamy, sultry disk came out to little fanfare earlier this year, but it's far too stunning to be overlooked. Perfect for meditation and copulation.

**ELECTRELANE**
**The Power Out** *(Too Pure/Beggars)* **out now.**
A blast of fresh, vital energy from this Brit quartet who call to mind the jauntiness of Stereolab and the intensely moody pop of New Order. No wonder the first single, "On Parade," was inspired by Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* — three of the gals are lesbians.

**KD LANG**
**Hymns of the 49th Parallel**
*(Warner Brothers)* **May 4.** Celebrate Canadian pride with la lang this Pride season, as the chanteuse takes on classics penned by our neighbors up north — Joni Mitchell and Neil Young among them.

**MAGNETIC FIELDS**
**I** *(Nonesuch)* **May 4.**
Love songs, nothing but love songs... The follow-up to MF's monumental *69 Love Songs* is another batch of sly, unexpectedly funny and tragic love songs from one of the greatest songwriters of our era, Stephin Merritt.

**PATTY GRIFFIN**
**Impossible Dream** *(ATO)* **April 20.**
She first struck a chord with gay fans on her *Flaming Red* album, singing poignantly about the suicide of a queer high school classmate named "Tony." Since then, her artistry has improved exponentially, leading up to this work of impossible beauty.

**MORRISSEY You Are The Quarry**
*(Attack Records/Sanctuary)* **May18.**
"Monday: humiliation/ Tuesday: suffocation/ Wednesday: condescension/ Thursday: is pathetic/ By Friday life has killed me." He's back, savage wit and self-lacerating impulses intact. Produced by Jerry Finn, who's worked with Green Day and Blink 182.

**GEORGE MICHAEL**
**Patience** *(Epic)* **June 1.**
His swan song? He claims it's his last major release. Advance word is he's leaving on a high note, with a mix of uptempo, randy disco tracks and soulful, openhearted ballads.

**ARTHUR RUSSELL**
**Calling Out of Context** *(Loose Joints)* **out now.**
This acclaimed NYC-based composer, cellist and singer who died from AIDS complications in '92 is now getting props for his daring disco songs as seen through an avant garde lens. This disc features songs from two previously unreleased albums.

**SIMPLE KID**
**Simple Kid 1** *(Vector)* **June 8.**
He's not on our team, but this wildly talented Brit upstart electro-pop-folkie is on our side. "If you're gay, it's ok. Say hello!" he cheers on the disc's first frisky track, sounding more than a bit like Blur's Damon Albarn.

**THALIA ZEDECK**
**As yet untitled** *(Thrill Jockey)* **September.**
The husky-voiced indie icon who led rockers Come to cult status in the '90s releases her third solo disc. Expect world-weary blues and dark cinematic beauty.

**FISCHERSPOONER**
**As yet untitled** *(Capitol)* **out in fall.**
The campy art-pop spectacle continues! Will writing with Linda Perry help them cross over? Stay tuned.

# IT'S ALIVE!

SIX must-see concert events.

## *MADONNA.*
## THE REINVENTION TOUR.
Madge struts her stuff all summer long.

## *MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL:*
## AUGUST 10-15, WALHALLA, MI.
The motherlode. Still rocking after all these years. Of course, it's still gals-only. www.michfest.com.

## *BONNAROO:*
## JUNE 11-13, MANCHESTER, TN.
It's not anything like Michigan, but this terrifically curated festival features some of the finest female talents on the planet: Patti Smith, Ani DiFranco, Neko Case, and Beth Orton among them. Plus: The Dead, Dylan, Wilco, and Yo La Tengo. www.Bonnaroo.com.

## *LOLLAPALOOZA:*
## DATES TO BE ANNOUNCED.
Morrissey, Sonic Youth, and the Flaming Lips co-headline this two-day-long traveling tour.

## *KD LANG:*
## TOUR KICKS OFF APRIL 30 IN HOUSTON, TX.
The Canadian crooner's ambitious 30-city tour will see her play with local orchestras in each location, keeping things fresh for performer and audience along the way.

## *QUEERCORE BLITZ.*
Mark your calendars: This queer punk tour, highlighted by the return of Donna Dresh — of Team Dresh fame — in her new band, Davies vs. Dresh, gets up and running again in December. Prepare to rock.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم "In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, Most Merciful"

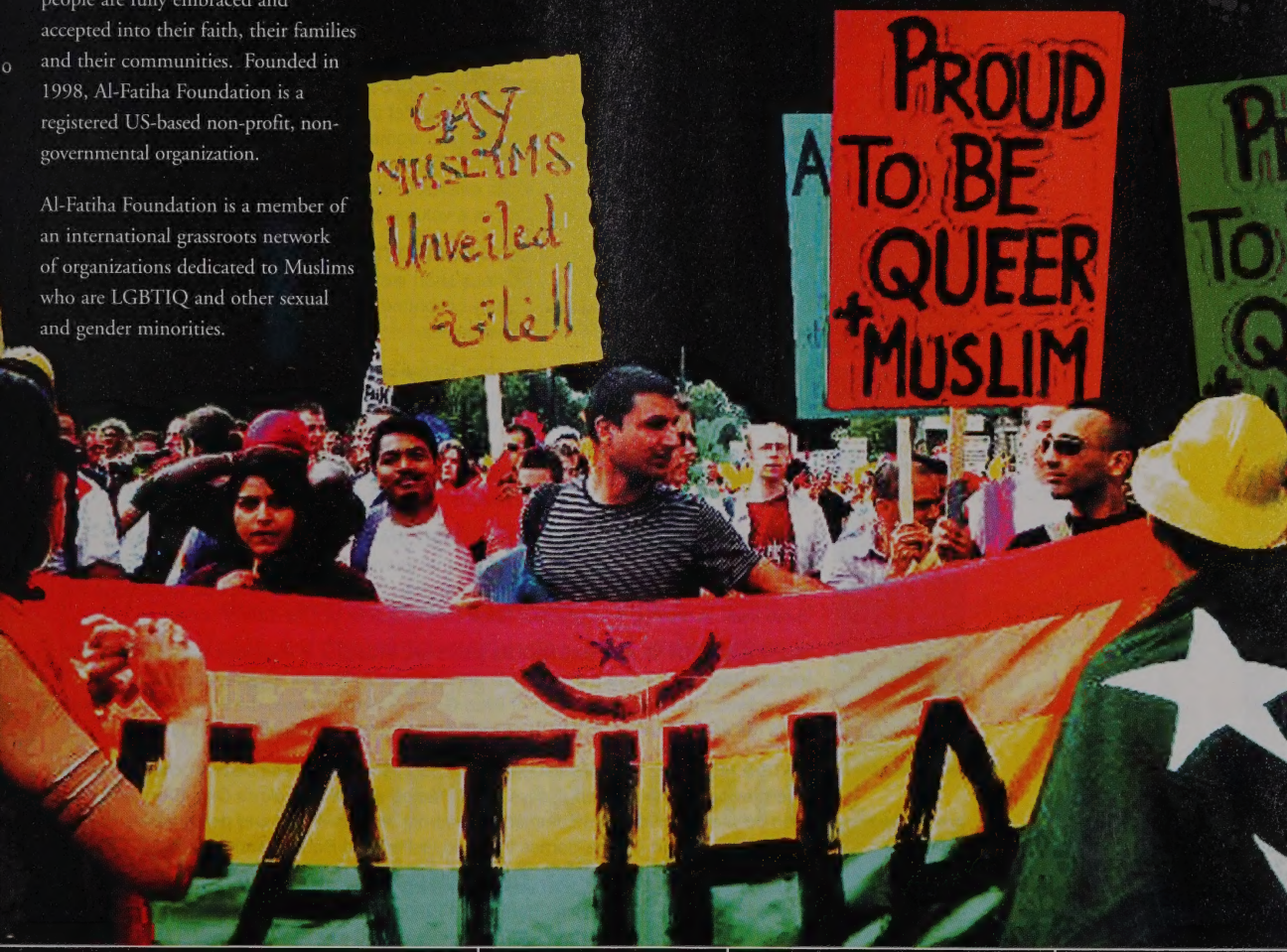
# Happy Pride from Al-Fatiha Foundation

**working on behalf of LGBTIQ Muslims & their allies!**

## Al-Fatiha Foundation

is dedicated to Muslims who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, questioning, those exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity, and their allies, families and friends. Al-Fatiha promotes the progressive Islamic notions of peace, equality and justice. We envision a world that is free from prejudice, injustice and discrimination, where all people are fully embraced and accepted into their faith, their families and their communities. Founded in 1998, Al-Fatiha Foundation is a registered US-based non-profit, non-governmental organization.

Al-Fatiha Foundation is a member of an international grassroots network of organizations dedicated to Muslims who are LGBTIQ and other sexual and gender minorities.




-Fatiha PO Box 33532 Washington, DC 20033 | Web: www.al-fatiha.org | Email: gaymuslims@yahoo.com | Tel. 202-223-3738

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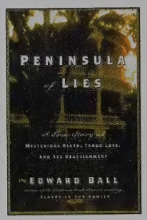
# PRINT-Y THINGS

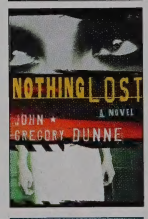
## **Drew Limsky** limns the best of this year's poetry and prose.




**HALF-LIFE, BY AARON KRACH (ALYSON, $13.95)** is an auspicious debut: a novel that explores the yearnings and anxieties of a teenage boy named Adam in the fictional Los Angeles neighborhood of Angelito. Adam's LA, Krach writes in one deft passage, is rarely windy, "unless you're near the beach, where it can blow with enough force to compel palm trees to bow humbly down." This is a quick-witted coming-of-age tale, sensitively drawn, and it showcases the author's sharp observational skills and gift for convincing dialogue; the protagonist's repartee with his nerdy best friend Dart is especially sure.

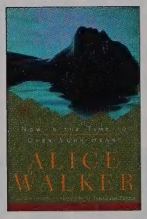
In the vein of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, Savannah native **EDWARD BALL** offers **PENINSULA OF LIES: A TRUE STORY OF MYSTERIOUS BIRTH, TABOO LOVE, AND SEX REASSIGNMENT (SIMON & SCHUSTER, $25)** the story of Dawn Simmons, a Charleston, South Carolina woman who changed her gender, penetrated Southern society and then risked it all by marrying a black man. In this compelling read, *Village Voice* writer Ball has simultaneously written a meticulous detective story and cast a scandalous party.

The stories in **THE JOY OF FUNERALS, BY ALIX STRAUSS (ST. MARTIN'S, $12.95)** are about the variety of ways people experience grief after the death of a loved one. In "Swimming Without Annette," for example, a woman becomes a self-styled vigilante after her girlfriend is slain by a serial killer. The narrator mournfully recalls Annette's lips as "soft and full, like feathers or white daisies." Full of feeling yet scalpel-precise, Strauss mines extreme situations and produces a volume as well crafted as it is disturbing.




In **THE MUSIC OF YOUR LIFE (SIMON & SCHUSTER, $13) JOHN ROWELL** supplies comic humiliation to spare. This hilarious short story collection takes a page from David Sedaris, and demonstrates how a finely calibrated sense of humor can act as a balm for at least some of life's miseries and indignities.

**NOTHING LOST (KNOPF, $24.95)** a novel by the late **JOHN GREGORY DUNNE** examines a sensational trial involving an unhinged supermodel, a prosecutor with secrets, a right-wing talk-show host and a gay defense lawyer. Dunne was the husband and sometime writing partner of Joan Didion (the duo co-wrote the screenplay for Barbra Streisand's version of *A Star is Born*) and his swansong delivers in the characteristic, hard-boiled style of his earlier novel, *True Confessions*.

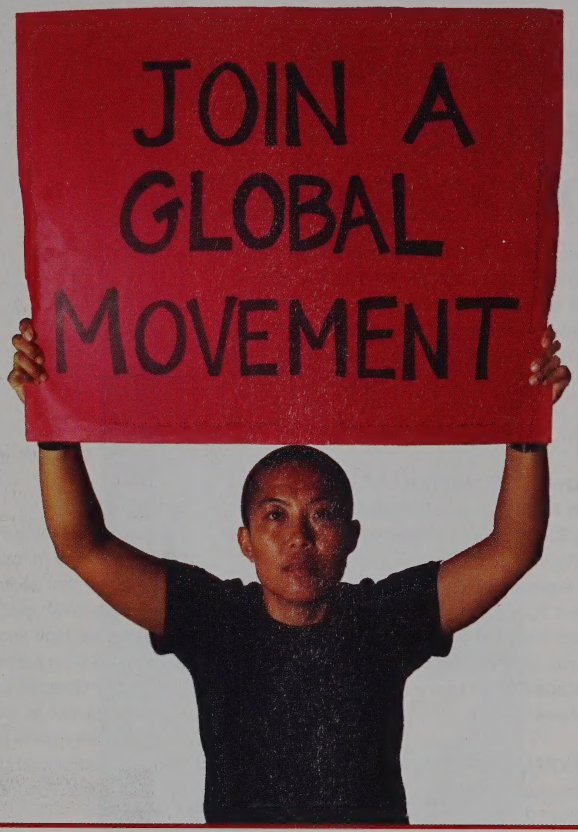



In **NOW IS THE TIME TO OPEN YOUR HEART (RANDOM HOUSE, $27.95), ALICE WALKER** portrays the spiritual and emotional journey of a 57-year-old woman still searching for meaning and adventure, even though she has had enough experience for three lives. A moving and graceful novel by the author of *The Color Purple*.

**CLAY'S WAY, BY BLAIR MASTBAUM (ALYSON, $12.95)** is a trenchant depiction of 21st-century teens lost in both the charms and dangers of Hawaii. Writing in offhand, naturalistic prose in the tradition of Brad Gooch's *Scary Kisses*, the 24-year-old author nails the ennui, frustration and confusion of kids waiting for their lives to begin.

**ARTS & LETTERS, BY EDMUND WHITE (CLEIS, $24.95)** is a stimulating collection of new and previously unpublished essays by the famed author of *A Boy's Own Story* and *The Married Man*. Included are commentaries about writers, artists and personalities from Marcel Proust and Djuana Barnes to David Geffen and Robert Mapplethorpe.

**A SON CALLED GABRIEL, BY DAMIAN MCNICHOLL (CDS BOOKS, $22.95)** is an impressively wrought novel set during the 1960s and '70s in the hills of Northern Ireland. The author's evocation of time and place is exacting; sort of a gay *Angela's Ashes*, Gabriel's story is both humorous and poignant.




Around the world, sexual and gender minorities are advocating for sexual freedom and human rights.

The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) collaborates with these courageous activists.

IGLHRC **documents** and **exposes** human rights violations; **strengthens local** efforts by training activists; and **advocates** for sexual rights within human rights organizations, governments and at the United Nations.

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# The Carrie Bradshaw Sweepstakes and other prizes

The summer brings **BETTER THAN SANE**, by *New Yorker* contributor **ALLISON ROSE (KNOPF, $23)** a memoir that details the author's journey from actress/model/whatever to Manhattan literary light, while *New York* magazine sex columnist **AMY SOHN** scores with **MY OLD MAN (SIMON & SCHUSTER, $23)** a witty yarn about a woman enduring a quarter-life crisis and her crazy Brooklyn family.

**FEVER: HOW ROCK AND ROLL TRANSFORMED GENDER IN AMERICA, BY TIM RILEY (ST. MARTIN'S, $24.95)** seems poised to breathe new life into the cultural dialogue. In this intelligently articulated argument, Riley invokes such disparate icons as Tina Turner, Elvis Presley and Courtney Love to claim that, more than merely entertaining, popular music conveys important and enduring social messages about tolerance and the challenging of sexual stereotypes.

**THE CRIMSON LETTER (GRIFFIN, $15.95)** by historian Douglass Shand-Tucci examines gay identity in the 19th- and 20th-centuries by telling the story of Harvard University — its legends, scandals and influence on American society.

**IN STONEWALL: SIX DAYS THAT TRANSFORMED A POLITICAL MOVEMENT (ST. MARTIN'S, $24.95)** David Carter draws on hundreds of interviews and previously sealed records to provide this definitive account of the watershed event in the struggle for gay civil rights.

To remind us of what all those GLBT civil rights pioneers were fighting for, pick up a copy of **THE GAY MAN'S KAMA SUTRA, BY TERRY SANDERSON (ST. MARTIN'S, $24.95)** even if you think you know it all.

## Verse

In **Hazmat,** acclaimed poet and *Yale Review* editor **J.D. McClatchy** (Knopf, $15) offers poems about lust and love that seduce like whispered incantations. With eloquence and insight, **D.A. Powell** mixes high and pop culture in **Cocktails** (Graywolf, $14) a collection of poems about bars, movies, the Gospels and AIDS. And for insomniacs and romantics of all stripes, **Poems of Sleep and Dreams** (Everyman's Library Pocket Poets, $12.50) includes meditations by Sappho ("Tonight I've Watched") and Thom Gunn ("Annihilation of Nothing").

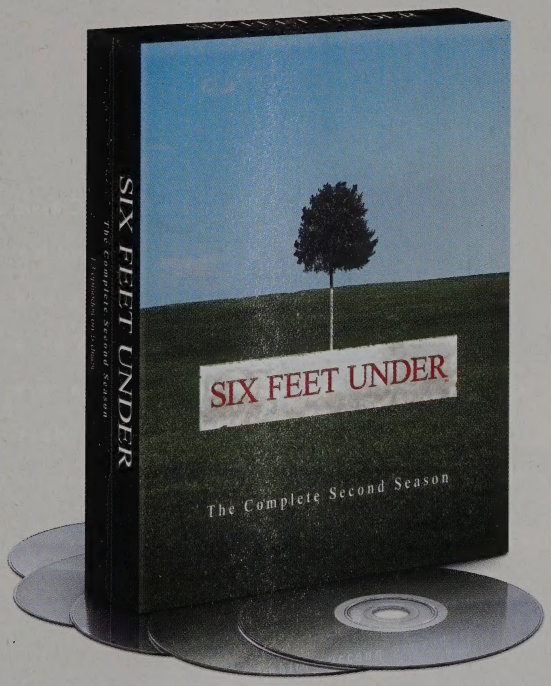
## Web

In the virtual world, where more and more of us are doing our reading, you can hear voices from around the globe on **www.wordswithoutborders.org,** a website funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and devoted to showcasing literary translations from countries whose work we rarely see. The page reminds us that "50 percent of all the books in translation now published worldwide are translated from English, but only 6 percent are translated into English." *Words Without Borders* helps to remedy the imbalance.

## Publications

**Blithe House Quarterly** (blithe.com) continues to provide top-quality short fiction from emerging and established GLBT writers. Recent contributors included Wayne Koestenbaum and Eileen Myles. **Lamba Book Report** (lambdalit.org) the journal that hands out the yearly literary awards, and the most authoritative site for news and reviews of GLBT-related books, offers a link to the poetry and stories in the highly regarded *James White Review.*

HBO VIDEO

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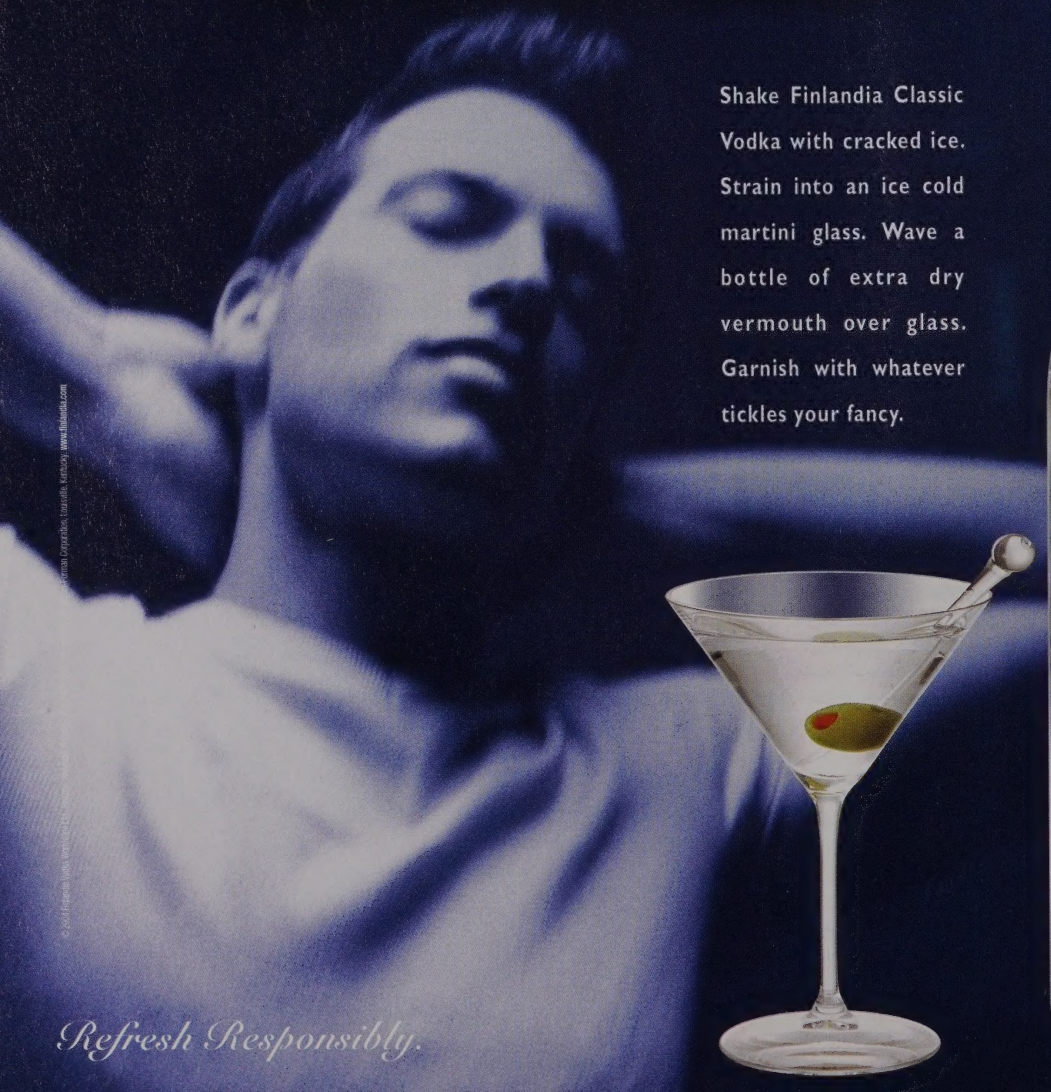
# the NAKED FINN

## STRAIGHT UP, BUT *NEVER STRAIGHT*



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Sleek, smart, the cover is the dustpan.
$7.99, retailers nationwide.

**LEONARDO DESIGN TEAM'S SPLASHY GLASSES**
Lurid luxe. Set of six, $55.
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**ORIGO BOWL**
Serve with a swerve. Small $24, Large $45.
Retailers and momastore.com.

**NAKED FINN**
3 oz. Finlandia Vodka.
Shake Finlandia Classic Vodka with cracked ice.
Strain into an ice cold martini glass.
Wave a bottle of extra dry vermouth over glass.
Garnish with whatever tickles your fancy.

**CANDELA RECHARGEABLE LAMPS**
Banish the batteries, lose the lighter. Set of four, $85. momastore.com.

**JONATHAN ADLER'S PLATINUM PITCHER**
Precious porcelain. $165, at retailers nationwide and Jonathan Adler NYC, LA, Easthampton, NY.

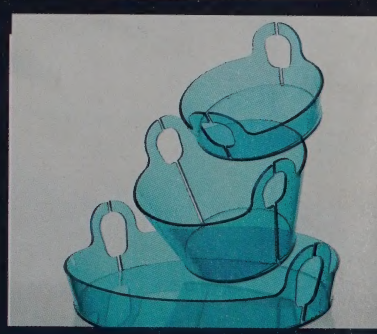
**DIRTY LINENS PILLOWCASES**
French toille with a Tom of Finland twist. groovyq.com.

**MIDNIGHT SUN MARTINI**
Put a few drops of red food coloring in lime juice.
Dip rim of glass in red-colored lime juice, then in granulated sugar.

In shaker with ice, combine:
1 1/2 oz. Finlandia Vodka
1/2 oz. Triple Sec
2 1/2 oz. white cranberry juice

Shake for 15-30 seconds.
Strain into chilled martini glass.
Garnish with stemless maraschino cherry.

SÓLÁS



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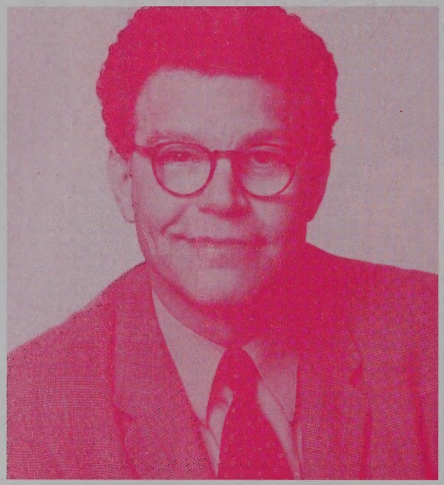
# AL FRANKEN

## The author of *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them,* and host of Air America's "The O'Franken Factor" on bodyslamming, Marriage and Stuart Smalley



**You versus Rush Limbaugh. Air America versus Clear Channel. Liberal money versus Conservative money. Does size matter?**
Of course it matters! As far as the radio networks go, give us a chance; we just started building. And as far as the elections go, liberals have to start giving more money.

**You're male, white, heterosexual and rich! Aren't you biting the hand that gives you tax breaks?**
Well, the Bush approach to taxes does work for me, not because I'm white and heterosexual, but because I'm rich. But we're all in this together, and we have to vote these guys out.

**Who currently rotates on the Al Franken Axis of Evil?**
Well, on the Axis of Profound Evil, I would have to say Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. But then you have the Mild Axis of Evil, which includes Anne Coulter, Bill O'Reilly and Dick Cheney.

**You've been accused of bodyslamming a heckler at a John Dean rally. That turned out to be untrue, but whom would you like to bodyslam?**
I would never bodyslam anyone unless there was a real reason, so I guess Osama bin Laden would be a good candidate, anyone in Al Qaeda, and then there's always Bill O'Reilly and Anne Coulter. But I think it's in all our best interests that people not go around bodyslamming indiscriminately.

**Best kisser: Anne Coulter or Camille Paglia?**
Well, I guess Camille Paglia, although both are sort of disgusting to me.

**Andrew Sullivan or Matt Drudge?**
Andrew, I would think.

**You've been married for 28 years — to the same person. What do you think? Should we go for it?**
Oh yes! Go for marriage! It's a really great institution. I can't understand why anyone can't just get married. I think I'd be miserable if I wasn't married. My wife and I have worked out a division of labor and we have a family; once we had that, even if there were periods when we hated each other, there was no question that we would stay together. And she's incredible. That really helps.

**Inquiring minds want to know: Is Stuart Smalley available?**
Oh, yes! Stuart's available. But he has issues…

BILL HAYWARD

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# WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T SWALLOW IT.

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